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AUSTIN'S SPEECH ACTS AND TEACHING

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of Graduate Studies

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In Partial Fulfilment

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Master of Education

by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a dissertation entitled "Austin's Speech Acts and Teaching" submitted by Dennis A. Hewish in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to explicate Austin's theory of speech acts, and to relate relevant aspects of that theory to the analysis of the concept of teaching. Austin's earlier work on the performative utterance is explicated first, and this is followed by an account of the factors which led Austin to abandon his performative-constative antithesis in favour of a more general approach to the question. His later work on the concept of the speech act (the act of doing things with words) is explicated in some detail, and the internal consistency of his system of locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts is closely examined, criticised, and, where feasible, amended.

The concept of teaching is considered as a philosophical problem in education, and some recent studies are briefly examined. Teaching is conceptualised as a matter of doing things with words, and an attempt is made to analyse the nature of verbal teaching behaviour. The pedagogical encounter, being the smallest possible unit of didactic discourse, is isolated as the focus of attention. The idea of a teacher saying something (such as "London is the capital of England") to a pupil, and in or by that saying something, to teach or attempt to teach that pupil, is analysed in the light of some relevant aspects of Austin's theory of speech acts. A heuristic model is constructed, designed to lay bare something of a *possible* logical structure of the pedagogical encounter in this light. As well as incorporating some

aspects of recent philosophy of mind, the model attempts to ground certain concepts in behaviour, thus rendering them amenable to empirical research.

The primary source for the dissertation is Austin's *How to do Things with Words*, although other papers by Austin are used extensively. On the concept of teaching, Ryle's *The Concept of Mind* and B. O. Smith's *A Study of the Logic of Teaching* are of primary importance. The method of investigation is primarily logical and conceptual analysis, although the latter portion of the dissertation makes some attempts at model construction.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Philosophy of J. L. Austin

Austin's work was largely concerned with the examination of the linguistic dimensions of philosophical discourse. He has been grouped with the "ordinary language" school of philosophers, although it might well be questioned whether, in fact, the philosophers to whom such a label refers have enough in common to warrant their being grouped together in a school. No doubt Austin was concerned with language, but his interest was unique.¹

This interest took two forms. Firstly, he often appealed to ordinary language to throw light on philosophical problems. That he did not hold ordinary language to be the final arbiter, however, is evidenced by this quotation from his published works:

Certainly, then, ordinary language is *not* the last word: in principle it can everywhere be supplemented and improved upon and superseded. Only remember, it *is* the *first* word.²

He achieved a great deal of success in what might be called the "dissolution" of philosophical problems by appealing to the common sense of everyday discourse. One prominent example of this occurs in his paper "Other Minds," where, in a manner similar to G. E. Moore's methods, he effectively shows certain questions about reality to be either pseudo-problems or irrelevant.³

Secondly, Austin was interested in a critical examination of language for its own sake. His interest in this seems to spring largely

from his dissatisfaction with philosophers' traditional obsessions with the *constative*⁴ dimensions of language. He refers to such pre-occupation as

...this craze for being either true or false, something which people think is peculiar to statements alone and ought to be set up on a pedestal of its own, above the battle.⁵

It is with this aspect of Austin's philosophy of language that the following thesis is concerned--the various considerations of speech which involve acts, and those aspects of language which seem to lie outside the true-false domain.

Teaching as a Philosophical Problem in Education

An "ordinary language" approach to the analysis of the concept of teaching was taken by Gilbert Ryle in 1949.⁶ *Inter alia*, he says that teaching is essentially "didactic discourse,"⁷ the purpose of which is "to better the mind of the recipient."⁸ Didactic discourse is "impersonal and untopical"⁹ as its content is "independent of the deliverer, the recipient, and the occasion of delivery."¹⁰ In this sense, didactic discourse differs from e.g., conversation, making a threat, etc. This concept of teaching emerges from Ryle's theory of intellect, and plays a crucial role in this theory in the allowance it makes for thought to be "progressive," i.e., for the act of instruction (whether by an agent or by self-instruction) to be capable of producing "results not contained in the original content."¹¹

Israel Scheffler,¹² exhibiting a distinctive Rylean influence, analysed the concept of teaching by differentiating between the act of

teaching and the act of telling. In addition to reinforcing Ryle's distinction between didactic discourse and other context-bound matters such as telling, Scheffler showed that telling does play a large part in the teaching process. He also emphasised that both teaching and telling are to be regarded as acts.

B. O. Smith and associates at the University of Illinois have recently attempted to capture the structure of verbal teaching behaviour by empirical means.¹³ Smith had earlier defined teaching as a "system of actions designed to induce learning"¹⁴ and the later research consisted of an examination of actual recorded teaching episodes. These were classified into episodes of defining, describing, designating, reporting, stating, substituting, evaluating, opining, classifying, comparing and contrasting, conditional inferring, explaining (further subdivided into six sub-types), and directing and managing the classroom. The empirical survey of a sample of teachers attempted to characterise verbal teaching behaviour by discovering the proportional incidence of each of these acts.

The concept of teaching is, therefore, taken to be worthy of attention as a legitimate problem in educational theory. It will be the purpose of this thesis to analyse, explicate, and amend the work of J. L. Austin, and to evaluate the relevance of this work on the speech act to the analysis of the concept of teaching. That teaching is an act is not disputed; that it involves *verbal acts* is also accepted. Austin's concept of the speech act, resting, as it does, on the notion of "doing things with words" is held to be seminal to a more general theory of teaching, and, perhaps, to a more general theory of

acts.

Plan of the Thesis

Chapters II and III consist of an explication of Austin's construction and demolition of the contrast between performative utterances and constative utterances. The explication will follow *How to do Things with Words*¹⁵ quite closely, and will be supplemented with references to "Performative Utterances"¹⁶ and "Performative-Constative"¹⁷ where helpful. Reference will also be made to other papers by Austin such as "Truth,"¹⁸ "Other Minds,"¹⁹ and "A Plea for Excuses,"²⁰ and these will serve not only to elucidate Austin's general position when such is not obvious from consideration of the primary texts, but also to give incidental demonstration of the overall consistency of his philosophy of language.

In particular it will be necessary to relate Austin's concept of the speech act to his general position on truth and falsity. The breakdown of the performative-constative antithesis--laboriously and persistently pursued in *How to do Things with Words*--is foreshadowed to some extent by a close study of his earlier paper on truth. Similarly, there are several prevalent misconceptions about Austin's theory of the performative utterance, deriving mainly from certain ideas expressed in "Other Minds", which can be corrected only by reference to his other works.

Chapter II will attempt to elucidate the concept of the performative utterance, and Chapter III will contrast this concept with the constative utterance, finally explicating the rationale behind Austin's

own rejection of the dichotomy. The explication in these chapters will attempt to elucidate Austin's arguments rather than evaluate them. Any criticism on the part of this writer would be premature because Austin's *own* criticisms of his *own* position are valid agents in the demolition of the performative-constative antithesis.

Thus, by the end of the third chapter, it should be evident that Austin has, by demolishing his own original distinction, paved the way for another approach to the problem. The fourth and fifth chapters will explicate more critically his attempts to construct a more general theory. This explication will deal with the six speech acts proposed by Austin: phonetic, phatic, rhetic, locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. An attempt will also be made to analyse the internal consistency of the theory.

The fifth chapter will discuss at some length the relation between *force* and *meaning* in Austin's theory, with special reference to the constative dimensions of illocutionary acts. It is hoped that a case can be made to render reasonable the idea that meaning is subject to illocutionary force in more ways than seem apparent in Austin's work. Particular attention will be paid to Austin's concept of meaning as being equivalent to sense and reference, and it will be argued that the act of referring is essential to all illocutionary acts. It will be argued that meaning--in the light of this notion of the act of referring--is often related to and dependent upon illocutionary force, and that many aspects of the constative dimensions of language can be at least partly subsumed under the more complex notion of the illocut-

ionary act.

Finally, there will be an explication of the varieties of illocutionary force exhibited by Austin's exercitives, behabitives, commissives, expositives, and verdictives.

The thesis will conclude with an examination of the general relevance of Austin's work to the conceptualisation of teaching. In particular, the ideas of illocutionary force, the phatic act, the act of referring, the conventions which govern the issuing of an utterance, and the perlocutionary outcome--all from Austin's theory of the total speech act in the total speech situation--will be incorporated into a conceptual model of the teaching act as an act of doing things with words. In the construction of this model several aspects of other research will be incorporated, especially some of Ryle's notions about episodes and dispositions. The model will attempt to lay bare some of the essential links in the teaching-learning chain, and it is hoped that the resulting conceptualisation of the teaching act will open doors to further research, especially in so far as certain key concepts may be "grounded" in behavioural terms, thus rendering them amenable, in principle at least, to empirical investigation.

References

- ¹G. J. Warnock, *English Philosophy Since 1900* (Oxford: O.U.P., 1958) p. 148.
- ²J. L. Austin, "A Plea For Excuses" *Philosophical Papers*, edited by J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock (London: O.U.P., 1961), p. 133.
- ³J. L. Austin, "Other Minds," *Philosophical Papers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-57. Austin asks whether the problem of reality is dependent on the assumption, e.g., that there is a difference between a table and a *real* table.
- ⁴The term is Austin's, and it refers to statements which are true or false.
- ⁵J. L. Austin, "Performative-Constative" in Charles E. Caton, *Philosophy and Ordinary Language* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), p. 31.
- ⁶Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963), pp. 264-300.
- ⁷*Ibid.*
- ⁸*Ibid.*, p. 292.
- ⁹*Ibid.*, p. 293.
- ¹⁰George F. Kneller, *Logic and Language of Education* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966), p. 225.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 226.
- ¹²Israel Scheffler, *The Language of Education* (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1960).
- ¹³B. O. Smith *et al.*, *A Study of the Logic of Teaching* (Urbana: University of Illinois Monograph, 1963).
- ¹⁴B. O. Smith, "A Concept of Teaching" in B. O. Smith and R. H. Ennis (editors), *Language and Concepts in Education* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1961), pp. 86-101.

¹⁵J. L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words*, edited by J. O. Urmson (London: O.U.P., 1962).

¹⁶*Philosophical Papers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-240.

¹⁷Charles E. Caton, *Philosophy and Ordinary Language*, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-54.

¹⁸*Philosophical Papers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-101.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 44-84.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 123-152.

CHAPTER II

THE PERFORMATIVE UTTERANCE

The Descriptive Fallacy

The earliest published indication of Austin's concern with performative utterances is in a section of his paper "Other Minds"¹ in which he argues that the locution "I know", like "I promise", is force-showing and not descriptive.² Although he nowhere uses the term "performative" in this article, his insistence on the distinction between utterances which *describe* the action being done, and those which *are the doing of* the action (i.e., his identification of the *descriptive fallacy*³) is the starting point for his eventual attempts to develop a theory of speech-acts.

To suppose that 'I know' is a descriptive phrase, is only one example of the *descriptive fallacy*, so common in philosophy.⁴

He claims that "...language was not in origin ... purely descriptive"⁵ and that utterances still, quite often, have a ritual function. (His theory of the evolution of language is based on the assumption that language developed in the first instance as a series of *ritual* utterances which soon established the conventions of regularly being taken in a certain way. If there is such a thing as a purely descriptive type of language, it must be a later development.) The utterance of a ritual phrase in the appropriate circumstances (such as saying "I do" in the course of a marriage ceremony) "...is not *describing* the action we are doing, but *doing* it."⁶ The descriptive fallacy consists in regarding such utterances as being either true

or false. They should rather be regarded as the performance of actions, and, as such, incapable of being true or false in themselves. As instances of these ritual phrases Austin lists "I warn," "I ask," "I define" and "I promise".⁷

Such phrases cannot, strictly, *be* lies, though they can 'imply' lies, as 'I promise' implies that I fully intend, which may be untrue.⁸

Austin complains that "the principle of Logic, that 'Every proposition must be true or false,' has too long operated as the simplest, most persuasive and most pervasive form of the descriptive fallacy."⁹ Statements are *made* and the making of the statement is an historic event.¹⁰ Further,

There are various *degrees* and *dimensions* of success in making statements: the statements fit the facts always more or less loosely, in different ways on different occasions for different intents and purposes.¹¹

He illustrates this point by asking whether statements such as "Belfast is north of London," "The galaxy is the shape of a fried egg" or "Wellington won the battle of Waterloo" are true or false. The degrees and dimension of success in each of these cases is seen to be intricately involved with the purposes of the utterer and the occasion of the utterance.

Similarly, he asks, "When is a statement not a statement?" and lists the following as answers which identify several types of 'masqueraders':

When it is a formula in a calculus: when it is a performatory utterance: when it is a value-judgement: when it is a definition: when it is part of a work of fiction.¹²

The important difference between the 'masqueraders' and (supposedly genuine) statements is that it is "...simply not the business of ... (the masqueraders) ... to 'correspond with the facts'."¹³

As has been mentioned before, performatory utterances, for example, are actions, and as such, are quite different from purely descriptive statements. However, it is as well to note at this stage that Austin does not presume the various masqueraders and statements to belong to mutually exclusive classes of utterances.

It is common for quite ordinary statements to have a performatory 'aspect': to say you are a cuckold may be to insult you, but it is also and at the same time to make a statement which is true or false.¹⁴

The Masqueraders

In order to avoid descriptive fallacies, Austin suggests that it is better not to call the masqueraders statements at all.¹⁵ He feels that the masqueraders need to be unmasked, and once identified, they should thenceforth be referred to by names which do not have a true-false connotation. In *How to do Things with Words*¹⁶ he elaborates on the way in which many things previously accepted by both grammarians and logicians as "statements" have, in recent years, been scrutinized with new care.¹⁷ It was Kant, he says, who first argued systematically that many "statements" were "strictly nonsense," and subsequent studies have led to the discovery of "fresh types of nonsense."¹⁸ But the matter is not, as the verificationists once supposed, a simple job of separating genuine statements from nonsense. The question to ask is whether these pseudo-statements ever really set out

to be statements at all. If they were never *intended* as statements, then it is not a valid procedure to judge them according to criteria which are applicable only *to* statements. Consequently,

...many traditional philosophical perplexities have arisen through a mistake--the mistake of taking as straightforward statements of fact utterances which are *either* (in interesting non-grammatical ways) nonsensical *or else* intended as something quite different.¹⁹

Also, even in the case of utterances which are apparently descriptive statements, there may be some specially perplexing words which "...do not serve to indicate some specially odd additional feature in the reality reported."²⁰ To regard these words as mere aspects of the "correspondence function"²¹ of the statement is to be guilty of the descriptive fallacy in just the same way as it is to regard (purely) performative utterances as being either true or false. The function of these "specially perplexing words" may be

...to indicate (not to report) the circumstances in which the statement is made or reservations to which it is subject or the way in which it is to be taken and the like.²²

The Preliminary Isolation of the Performative

It is with the masqueraders that Austin chiefly concerns himself. Primarily he is interested in the types of masqueraders he calls performative. He denies that this is a type of nonsense "...though misuse of it can ... engender rather special varieties of 'nonsense'."²³ In order to establish the concept of a performative Austin begins his account by drawing a distinction (exaggerated, as will be noticed) between two classes of utterance. On the one hand there is the class

of *constative* utterances: these are true or false, and may be regarded as the paradigms of what have previously been taken as genuine statements.²⁴ On the other hand are the masqueraders: these are utterances which do not have a true-false dimension in so far as they are never intended as statements.²⁵ Within this class there are varieties of nonsense and also other types of utterance which are not nonsense. One of these other types is known as the performative utterance. Performative utterances fulfil two conditions:

- A. They do not 'describe' or 'report' or constate anything at all, are not 'true or false'; and,
- B. The uttering of the sentence²⁶ is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which ... would not *normally* be described as saying something.²⁷

As examples of performative utterances Austin lists certain "humdrum verbs in the first person present indicative active" such as "I do" (uttered in the course of a marriage ceremony), "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*," "I give and bequeath my watch to my brother," and "I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow."²⁸ The performative utterance, as exemplified, consists of the issuing of an utterance in order to perform an act, *not* to describe the act so performed, *nor* to state that one is performing it.²⁹ It is not normally thought of as just saying something.³⁰

Austin simply claims that such performative utterances are not true or false: he says that it is clearly obvious that this is so, and argues no further.³¹

To name this ship *is* to say (in the appropriate circumstances) the words 'I name, &c.'. When I say, before the registrar or altar, &c., 'I do', I am not reporting on a marriage: I am indulging in it.³²

He is, however, careful to reject the notion that, for example, to marry is simply to say a few words. Rather, the uttering of the words "is *a* (or even *the*) leading incident in the performance of the act ... but it is possibly never the *sole* thing necessary if the act is to be deemed to have been performed."³³ Also, it is sometimes possible for the act to be performed by means other than the performative utterance³⁴ e.g., in some societies marrying may be accomplished by mere cohabitation. However, in all cases of ceremonial or ritual acts³⁵ it is always necessary that the circumstances be, in various ways and according to various requirements, appropriate.³⁶ The important point Austin makes in this respect is that the utterance itself (e.g., "I promise") is *not* to be taken as indicative of or reporting on the circumstances (e.g., that I fully intend to) and therefore true or false. Rather, if the circumstances of the utterance are in some way lacking or inappropriate (e.g., I can say "I promise" when I do not intend to carry out the promise) then the act is said to be *void*. The utterance "I promise" is not itself false (indeed, the act of promising *is* accomplished), but it may imply or insinuate a falsehood.³⁷ Thus, when I say "I promise" but I do not intend to carry out the promise, I have not made a false statement: I have abused the conventions of promising. Acts are not true or false, but in the case of acts which are performed by (or with) the utterance of a performative formula, they may be said to be abused, or to misfire, or to be null and void, etc.³⁸

The Doctrine of Infelicities

In order to clarify the antithesis between statements (which are said to be true or false) and performatives (which are said to be happy or unhappy) Austin proposes a general "doctrine of infelicities."³⁹ He explicates the *felicitous* functioning of a performative ('or at least of a highly developed explicit performative')⁴⁰ by listing the following conditions which must be fulfilled:

- (A.1) There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances, and further,
- (A.2) the particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked.
- (B.1) The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and
- (B.2) completely.
- (Γ.1) Where, as often, the procedure is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must in fact have those thoughts or feelings, and the participants must intend so to conduct themselves, and further,
- (Γ.2) must actually so conduct themselves subsequently.⁴¹

Breaches of conditions (A) and (B) are referred to as "misfires" and breaches of conditions (Γ) are "abuses." Misfires are characterised by the act being voided in some way, i.e., disallowed or vitiated, whilst abuses consist of professed acts which are really hollow because of, e.g., insincerities. Austin schematises the various ways in which performatives may be rendered unhappy (Figure 1). The doctrine of infelicities is to be primarily regarded as a general theory of the ways in which performatives may be deficient or faulty.

Infelicities

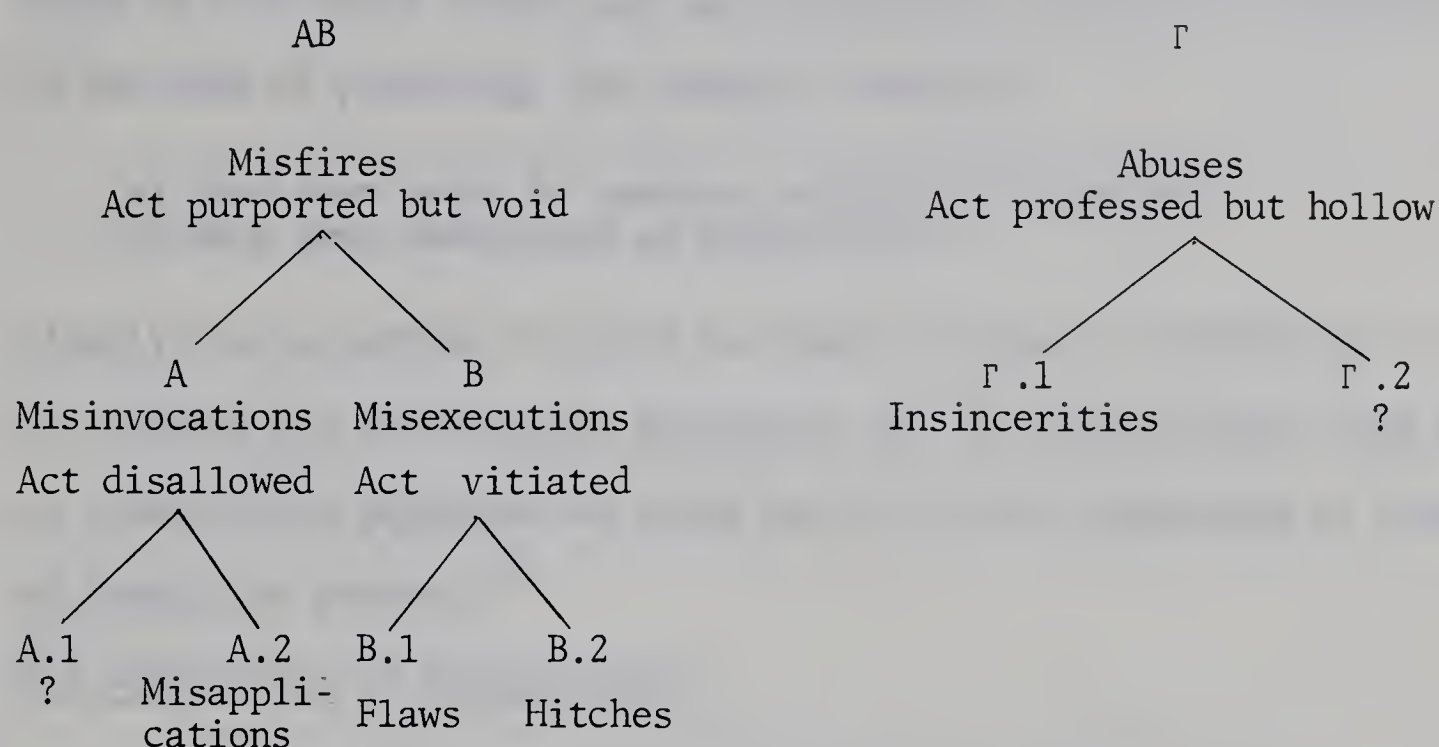


Figure [1]: The Doctrine of Infelicities.⁴²

However, Austin does not use his doctrine to demarcate performatives from constatives with any great degree of mutual exclusion. Rather, he insists that the doctrine of infelicities may have some important bearing on the analysis of statements and other types of masqueraders as well as performatives. For example, he suggests that "The present king of France is bald" is comparable with the act of bequeathing a watch one does not own,⁴³ in so far as both utterances are more properly regarded as being *void* rather than false.⁴⁴

The doctrine of infelicities is far from being a complete statement of the criteria for felicity in all performatives; nor is it, as has been seen, relevant only to performative utterances. Austin is

careful to explain that performative utterances may be subsumed under the more general class of *acts*, and, as such, are prone to many "other kinds of ill" which infect not only utterances, but acts in general.⁴⁵ In the case of promising, for example, one must

- (a) have been heard by someone, perhaps the promisee;
- (b) have been understood as promising.⁴⁶

Finally, he is careful to point out that the types of infelicity in his account are not mutually exclusive, and in any particular case of an infelicitous performative there may be various admixtures of types of infelicity present.⁴⁷

The Conventions of Performatives

Austin insists that, at least in the case of "highly developed explicit performatives", there must exist "an accepted conventional procedure having certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances."⁴⁸ His elaboration of this point, especially in regard to the use of the words "exist" and "accepted," is rather inconclusive, and the precise meaning of "conventional procedure" is difficult to determine. Since this becomes of utmost importance in relation to the illocutionary act, it may be advisable to postpone discussion of the matter until that section of the thesis (See Chapter V). In the interim it is as well to take note that this conventional procedure may take many forms. For example, promising may be effected by saying "I promise," "You have my word that I will" or by answering "yes" to the question "Do you promise?" Similarly, a bet may be transacted by saying not only "I bet," but also by saying "Five pounds on the nose," or

even by an exchange of looks and a handshake. All of these are, more or less, accepted conventional procedures. However, when the performative is seen in the light of *acts in general* and *utterances in general*, it is difficult to delineate the conventional from the non-conventional. From one point of view, the whole of language may be regarded as a conventional means of communicating.

Explicit Performatives

The examples of "highly developed performatives" used by Austin in the early sections of his book are all *explicit* performatives in the sense that

...they all begin with or include some highly significant and unambiguous expression such as 'I bet', 'I promise', 'I bequeath'--an expression very commonly also used in the naming of the act which, in making the utterance, I am performing--for example, betting, promising, bequeathing, etc.⁵⁰

Other utterances, such as "I shall be there" may be more or less performative, depending (e.g., in this case) on whether the utterance is meant as a promise, threat, warning, or a simple statement of intention. In the case where "I shall be there" is genuinely intended to be, and is taken as, a promise, it is a form Austin calls *implicit performative*, and it may be re-phrased in the *explicit* form "I promise that I shall be there."

Explicit performatives are characterised by the verb being in the first person present indicative active. Max Black elucidates this aspect of Austin's performatives thus:

An utterance of the form 'I X (such and such)' is said to be performative ... when used in specified circumstances, if and only if its so being used counts as a case of the speaker's thereby X-ing.⁵¹

However, it seems that Black has misconstrued Austin's interest in the explicit form. That Austin did not hold the explicit form ('I X') to be *definitive* of the performative is evidenced by his comment to the effect that expressions of the general form 'I X' are "*very commonly... used* used in naming the act."⁵² (Emphasis added). Austin fully realised that the form 'I X' may not necessarily be the explicit form of all performatives. It is difficult to see why Black introduces a strict "if-and-only-if" formula, since Austin's analysis of the function of explicit performatives clearly shows that some examples (e.g., "I thank you whenever you help me") are quite descriptive. There are, however, several important aspects of the explicit performative formula which will be discussed more fully later. When Austin takes note that all performatives seem to have constative dimensions, he appeals once again to the explicit performative formula, but not in the hope of making it definitive. Before examining this analysis in the next chapter, it will be necessary to review the inseparability of performatives from constatives, and to account for Austin's views on the evolution of language.

References

- ¹J.L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers*, (London: O.U.P., 1961) pp. 44-84.
- ²*Ibid.*, pp. 65-71.
- ³*Ibid.*, p. 71.
- ⁴*Ibid.*
- ⁵*Ibid.*
- ⁶*Ibid.*
- ⁷*Ibid.*
- ⁸*Ibid.*
- ⁹J.L.Austin, "Truth", *Philosophical Papers, op. cit.*, p. 99.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 87.
- ¹¹*Ibid.* p. 98.
- ¹²*Ibid.*, p. 99.
- ¹³*Ibid.*
- ¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 101.
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 99.
- ¹⁶Edited by J.O.Urmson (London: O.U.P., 1962).
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 2ff.
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ²⁰*Ibid.*

- ²¹Austin seemed inclined towards a correspondence theory of truth, although he had several qualifications to make about other types of correspondence theory.
- ²²*How to do Things with Words*, *Op. cit.*, p. 3.
- ²³*Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ²⁵*Ibid.* See also, "Truth", *Philosophical Papers*, *op. cit.*, p. 99.
- ²⁶Austin seems to use 'sentence' to refer to a unit of language, and 'utterance' to refer to a unit of speech. Thus a sentence is *used* to make a statement, perform an act, and so on.
- ²⁷*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
- ²⁸*Ibid.*
- ²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 7.
- ³¹*Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ³²*Ibid.*
- ³³*Ibid.*, p. 8.
- ³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ³⁵Austin uses the terms "ceremonial" and "ritual" in a broad sense including not only such obvious cases as marrying, bequeathing and naming, but also such acts as promising, warning or betting. This is more fully dealt with in the discussion of the conventions of illocutionary acts in Chapter V.
- ³⁶*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
- ³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 12ff.

³⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 14ff.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁴⁴This position, as will be shown in the next chapter, foreshadows the eventual breakdown of the performative-constative antithesis. It should be remembered that Austin is over-emphasising the contrast at this stage in order to make a conceptual point.

⁴⁵"...since in uttering our performatives we are undoubtedly in a sound enough sense 'performing actions' then, as actions, these will be subject to certain whole dimensions of unsatisfactoriness to which all actions are subject." *How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 21. Also, "...as utterances our performatives are *also* heir to certain kinds of ill which infect *all* utterances." *Ibid.*

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 22-23,

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴⁹See Chapter V.

⁵⁰*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁵¹Max Black, "Austin on Performatives", *Philosophy*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 145, 1963, p. 220.

⁵²*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

CHAPTER III

THE PERFORMATIVE-CONSTATIVE ANTITHESIS

The Constative Dimensions of Performative Felicity

In considering the various requirements which ensure the felicity of a performative utterance Austin concludes that

...certain conditions have to be satisfied if the utterance is to be happy--certain things have to be so.¹

These "certain things" are the various conditions listed in his schema.² For example, in order for the performative utterance "I promise" to be happy: there must exist an accepted conventional procedure of promising; the utterance "I promise" must be the appropriate utterance in the circumstances for the invocation of the procedure; the procedure of promising must be followed correctly and completely; the person promising must have the thoughts, feelings and intentions appropriate to the procedure, and to subsequent conduct foreshadowed by the procedure; and the parties concerned must subsequently act according to the requirements of subsequent conduct foreshadowed by the procedure.³ All of this is tantamount to saying that the happiness of the performative utterance "I promise" is dependent upon the *truth* of certain statements.

...(T)his...commits us to saying that for certain performative utterances to be happy, certain statements have *to be true*.⁴

Austin points out that his conditions for felicity may by no means exhaust all of the statements that have to be true,⁵ but it is at least clear that *some* statements must be so. He then turns his atten-

tion to the relationship between the performative utterance and the statements with which it is concerned. He draws a distinction between the statement "He is running" (which depends for its *truth* on the fact that he is running), and the performative utterance "I apologise" (whose *felicity* ensures that I am, in fact, apologising).⁶

Austin explicates three ways in which statements may depend on the truth or falsity of other statements, or in which statements might be said to be related to other statements.⁷ The first of these is strictly logical *entailment*, which is best exemplified by the way in which a universal entails a subaltern, or a proposition entails its contrapositive.

The second is *implication*, and this term he wishes to reserve for use in a sense he attributes to G.E. Moore. Thus, my assertion of a proposition such as "The cat is on the mat" implies that I believe the cat to be on the mat. This is quite different from logical entailment because the denial of my belief does not result in any *inconsistency* with my statement. In other words, if my saying "The cat is on the mat" implies that I believe it to be so, there is no logical inconsistency between

(a) it being true that the cat is on the mat and it being false that I believe the cat to be on the mat; or,

(b) the statements "The cat is on the mat" and "I do not believe that the cat is on the mat" both being true.

The two statements are quite compatible in any strict logical sense, yet it is somehow outrageous to say (conjointly) "The cat is on the mat and I don't believe it is."

The third type of relationship is that of *presupposition*. The statement "All John's children are bald" presupposes that John has children. This differs from entailment in so far as the contrary of "All John's children are bald" also presupposes that John has children.

Clearly, then, the three types of possible relationship - entailment, implication and presupposition - are distinguishable from each other. Austin concerns himself with "implies" and "presupposes" as the types of relation which may have most bearing on the constative dimensions of performative felicity.

There are four "specially notable" connections between performatives and statements:

- (1) If the performative utterance "I apologise" is happy, then the statement that I am apologising is true.
- (2) If the performative utterance "I apologise" is to be happy, then the statement that certain conditions apply --those notably in rules A.1 and A.2--must be true.
- (3) If the performative utterance "I apologise" is to be happy, then the statement that certain other conditions obtain--those notably in our rule T.1--must be true.
- (4) If performative utterances of at least some kinds are happy, for example, contractual ones, then statements of the form I ought or I ought not subsequently to do some particular thing are true.⁸

The second condition above is similar to--perhaps even identical with--the relationship of *presupposition* explicated earlier. There is at least a sound parallel relationship (if not an identity) between (a) All John's children being bald and the fact that John has children, and (b) "I apologise" and the fact that there is a conventional procedure of apologising.

The third connection above is held to exhibit at least a parallel (if not an identical) relationship with *implication* as explicated earlier. Thus, the relationship in (a) "The cat is on the mat" and my believing it to be so, is at least parallel to the relationship in (b) "I promise" and my having the appropriate thoughts, feelings and intentions.

The fourth connection seems to come closer than any of the others to parallelling (if not being identical with) strict logical *entailment*. As Austin says, "I promise to do X but I am under no obligation to do it," which both commits the utterer and, at the same time, frees him from commitment, looks more like a self-contradiction (in the strict logical sense) than any of the other connections. However, Austin does not think that the establishment of a parallel here is of great importance.

What *is* of great importance is that the parallels in cases (2) and (3) are strongly supportable, and that, if this is the case, the antithesis between performatives and constatives is in danger of breaking down. Austin, fully aware of the dangers, concludes that

...considerations of the happiness and unhappiness type may infect statements (or some statements), and considerations of the type of truth and falsity may infect performatives (or some performatives).⁹

Austin's Theory of Linguistic Evolution

A proper understanding of Austin's concept of the speech-act, and in particular, of his treatment of the explicit performative formula, is assisted by an appreciation of his theory of the evolution of lan-

guage. He accepts the views of Jespersen¹⁰ that primitive languages were probably characterised by one-word utterances having manifold functions. For example, in such a primitive language, the utterance "thunder" could be a warning, information, a prediction, and so on.¹¹ Thus, the precise force of the utterance may have been a matter of ambiguity of equivocation or vagueness of some sort (as, indeed, it still often is). He admits that such a view is open to challenge, but he claims that it has more to offer than the more frequent mistake of taking it for granted "that we somehow *know* that the primary or primitive use of sentences must be, because it ought to be, *statemental* or *constative*."¹² He says "we simply do not know that this is so." He adopts the view that the idea of a "pure"¹³ statement is a goal or an ideal towards which we are moving, assisted by the impetus of the requirements of science. There are, in fact, two related goals: precision and explicitness.¹⁴

Language as such and in its primitive stages is not precise, and it is also not, in our sense, explicit: precision in language makes it clearer what is being said--its *meaning*: explicitness, in our sense, makes clearer the *force* of the utterance, or 'how...it is to be taken.'¹⁵

There have been developments of various speech-devices which improve the precision and explicitness of utterances. Some of the more primitive of these (all more or less still in use) are: use of the imperative mood;¹⁶ variations in tone of voice, cadence, and emphasis;¹⁷ the employment of various circumlocutions such as adverbs and adverbial phrases;¹⁸ the use of connecting participles such as "hereby", "although" and "therefore";¹⁹ various accompaniments of the utterance such as gestures;²⁰ and the circumstances of the utterance, such as, e.g., the

health of the speaker who says "I bequeath my fortune to you."²¹

As a relatively late development in the evolution of such speech-devices, Austin lists the *explicit performative*, i.e., the form of a performative utterance which serves to make explicit the way in which the utterance is to be taken. It is important to regard the explicit performative as a speech-device--i.e., a comparatively lately developed formula--whose use in language is to achieve something of the ideal goal of *explicitness of force* in the same way, for example, that measurements have been developed as a satisfactory approach towards the attainment of the ideal goal of *precision of meaning*. The distinction between being precise and making explicit is a crucial one and is central to Austin's whole theory of speech-acts. He repeatedly insists that making explicit is *not stating* what the force of the utterance is.²² In the same way as saying "Salaam" when I bow is *not stating* that I am doing obeisance to someone, so the explicit formula "I promise" is *not stating* that I am promising (although, as has been seen, it implies - in some sense - that the fact that I am promising is true). In both cases the function of the utterance is to make explicit--to show, to indicate, etc.,--how the utterance is to be taken.

The Asymmetry of Explicit Performative Verbs

One of the more striking features of verbs which (in the first person, singular number, present tense, indicative mood, active voice) act as explicit performatives is the essential asymmetry between the explicit form and other parts of the conjugation.

The fact that there is *this* asymmetry is precisely the mark of the performative verb (and the nearest thing to a *grammatical* criterion in connexion with performatives).²³

The performative "I bet" exhibits an asymmetry with "I betted" [*sic*] and "he bets," which is not present in the case of "I run," and "I ran" and "he runs." The asymmetry is this: in the case of the performative verb it appears that the first person singular present indicative active is not descriptive or constative, whilst other tenses and persons of the conjugation are. In the case of the constative verb--in this case, "run"--there is no such asymmetry between the first person singular present indicative active and other tenses and voices--all are descriptive. That this asymmetry is so is further supported by considerations of the report given after the event. If John says "I promise" and Bill says "I run," a *report* of what John did would be to the effect that *he promised* (which is equivalent to "He said 'I promise'," but not to "He said he promised"); but a *report* of what Bill did would not be to the effect that *he ran*, but rather "He said he ran" (which is equivalent to "He said 'I run'").

However, this grammatical criterion is not sufficient to distinguish between performatives and constatives because, even in the case of verbs that appear to be in the explicit form, the first person singular present indicative active may be, in fact, descriptive. Whilst "I promise" and "I bet" seem to be unambiguously performative, "I promise only when I intend to keep my word" and "I bet him sixpence (every morning) that it will rain" are clearly not performative, but descriptive.²⁴

From the above remarks, and taking into consideration Austin's

more detailed analysis of the explicit performative formula,²⁵ it can be concluded that there is unlikely to be any single criterion of grammar by which the performative can be distinguished from the constative.²⁶ Many utterances, such as "I shall be there" may be reducible (or expandable, or analysable) to the explicit performative form such as "I promise I shall be there" and this may be helpful. But that it is not definitive is evidenced by the fact that apparently constative utterances such as "Water is denser than oil" are similarly reducible to an "I state that..." formula. This formula follows the explicit performative form, and is, in all cases, indistinguishable from it by simple grammatical tests. Yet, it seems clear, the acceptance of "I state" as a performative is at odds with the original distinction between performatives and constatives. Further, in the sense of 'making explicit' (as Austin uses that phrase), the "I state" formula is clearly a matter of making explicit the *force* of the utterance: it indicates that the utterance is *to be taken as* a statement, and not, e.g., as a guess or a postulation, etc.

The Four-Way Test for Explicit Performative Verbs

Having rejected the possibility of devising satisfactory distinguishing criteria on grammatical grounds, Austin turns his attention to certain admixtures of the performative and constative dimensions in various utterances. For example, the utterance "I apologise" seems to be performative in so far as to apologise *is to say* "I apologise." On the constative side, a purely [*sic*] descriptive utterance (which would have to be true for "I apologise" to be felicitous) is "I repent."

It is not performative in the way "I apologise" is, because the utterance "I repent" is not strictly taken as an apology. But the utterance "I am sorry" seems to fall mid-way between these two extremes. If I say "I am sorry" it can often be intended as, and taken as, an apology, and yet it also has a descriptive dimension in so far as it gives an account, or a report, of my state. Similarly, there is the same subtle distinction between "I approve" (performative), "I feel approval" (constative) and "I approve of..." (part performative, part constative).²⁷

The pure performatives, such as "I thank", "I apologise" and "I approve" present little difficulty. Neither do the pure constatives: "I feel grateful", "I repent" and "I feel approval". But the mid-way examples, such as "I am grateful", "I am sorry", and "I approve of...", are ambiguous. What is needed is some sort of test which will help to determine whether such utterances are, on a particular occasion, performative or not. Austin proposes four tests. Firstly, we can ask "Does he really?"²⁸ It makes sense to ask of someone who says "I am grateful", "Is he really grateful?", but such a procedure is nonsense in the case of "I thank". If someone says "I thank", *he thanks*, and it is not in order to ask if he really thanks. Similarly, in the case of "I am sorry" and "I approve of...", we can ask "Is he really sorry?" or "Does he really approve of...?" but if the utterance is "I apologise" or "I approve", we cannot ask "Does he really apologise?" or "Does he really approve?", for *to say "I apologise" is to apologise*, and *to say "I approve" is to approve*.

Of course, there are liable to be infelicities here in many ways,

e.g., we may say 'He swore to tell the truth but we know he lied', or 'He thanked me in a most insincere and hypocritical way', or 'He bequeathed me \$1,000 but his stocks fell sharply last week'. These various considerations render the performative utterance unhappy in various ways, but this does not affect their status *as performatives*. Just as a statement may be said to be true *or* false, it remains that a false statement *is* a statement. So an unhappy performative utterance *is* a performative utterance. Austin's 'Did-he-really?' test is valid, because if we are to exclude infelicitous performatives from the *class* of performatives on the grounds of their infelicity, i.e., if we were to say, when John says 'Thank you' or 'I apologise' without meaning it, that he *didn't really* thank or apologise, then we could not say things like 'His thanks were (or his apology was) insincere', nor could we refuse to accept someone's apology or thanks. We could not even *refer* to them as thanks or apologies. To dispense with the concept of an infelicitous performative is to dispense with the concept of felicity, in just the same way as dismissing a false statement as not being a statement at all is to dispense with the concept of truth-falsity. If statements cannot be false, what else can? We would be in the dilemma of having to regard the phrase 'true statement' as being redundant, and 'felicitous performative' likewise. When I say 'I thank you', or 'I apologise', you may, for some very good reason, e.g., I do not mean it, I am insincere, I am being sarcastic, etc., refuse to acknowledge or accept my thanks or my apology. But I still *did* thank you and I still *did* apologise. It may have been sarcastic thanks or an insincere apology, but it *was* thanks, and it *was* an

apology, no matter how poorly it stands up to criticism in the various dimensions of success.

Whilst we may say, e.g., of an insincere apology that it was, nevertheless, an apology, it seems that some performatives stand up to this test better than others. Thus, a young child who says to his teacher "I order you to give me a high grade" is usually not thought of as having ordered his teacher, but as having *tried* to give an order. Similarly, if someone furtively creeps into the dockyards at night and breaks a bottle against the stem of the ship, saying at the same time "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth!*", he is usually not thought of as having *named* the ship, but as having *purported* to name it. These examples stand in contrast to other cases such as thanking and apologising. It seems that the type of infelicity to which the utterance is prone affects the way in which it is reported. Apologising, thanking and promising, on the one hand, which are more prone to infelicities of the *r* type, tend to be reported subsequently as apologies, thanks and promises, even though they may be infelicitous in some ways: they are *abuses*. On the other hand, naming and ordering, which are more prone to infelicities of the AB types, are usually reported as being attempts at the act, or as purporting to name or to order: they are *misfires*. Thus, the "Did-he-really?" test is strictly out of order only in the case of performatives which are prone to infelicities of the *r* type. In the case of performatives which are prone to AB infelicities, the "Did-he-really?" test is not strictly out of order, for one must allow the answer 'No, but he tried'.

The second test is to ask whether one could "be really doing it

without actually saying something".²⁹ I can be sorry without actually saying "I am sorry", but I cannot apologise without saying "I apologise". (It should be noted that some cases allow for the performance of a non-verbal ritual act in place of an utterance.)³⁰

The third test is to ask whether an adverb such as "deliberately" or a phrase such as "I am willing to..." can be inserted in the utterance. The rationale here is that if the issuing of the utterance is the performance of an act, then one ought to be able (at least on some occasions) to do the act deliberately, or at least be willing to do it.³¹ This is even more obvious if the acts we are talking about are conventional, as opposed to real, acts. Consequently, I can be willing to apologise, and I can deliberately approve, but I cannot be willing to be sorry, nor can I deliberately approve *of* something.

The fourth test is to ask whether the utterance could be literally false.³² Thus, "I am sorry" is liable to falsity, but "I apologise" is liable only to insincerity (or some other form of infelicity). However, this fourth test is simply a reiteration of the original performative-constative distinction. As such it makes little contribution towards the solution of the central problem i.e., the problem of determining whether an utterance is performative or not. Considerations of truth and falsity are merely appeals to the original distinction, and it is necessary to appeal to other factors, since it is this very distinction that is in question. Consequently the fourth test has a kind of circularity about it which does nothing more than take the investigation back to where it all started. As has been noted,

"I am sorry" could literally be false, but it may be, and very often is, used as a pure performative.

Austin notes two exceptions to his rules. Firstly, what he calls "purely polite" ritual phrases such as "I have pleasure in..." fail all four tests and are thus not performative.³³ Despite Austin's dismissal of these as a "limited class" it seems pertinent to ask what these are if they are neither performative nor constative.

Secondly, occasions of "suiting the action to the word"³⁴ are exceptions, but may become purely performative where the action is itself a purely ritual one, e.g., bowing ("I salute you"). This is an extension of the sort of difficulty foreshadowed in the second test.

Truth and Falsity Reconsidered

The original distinction between performative utterances (being happy or unhappy) and constative utterances (being true or false) seems in danger of breaking down. For, whenever Austin tries to approach the problem from other aspects, considerations of the felicity of performatives lead him into dimensions of criticism which are more usually associated with truth and falsity than with felicity. On the other hand, his considerations of truth in various articles lead him into dimensions of criticism which are more appropriate to felicity.³⁵

The one significant difficulty lies in considerations of the utterance "I state" which, from one point of view, ought to be strictly constative, and from another point of view, seems to be clearly performative, especially since none of the tests so far devised serves to separate "I state" from the class of more obvious performatives such

as "I promise", "I apologise", etc.

Is stating an act in the same sense as marrying, apologising, betting, etc.? ... (I)t is already pretty evident that the formula 'I state that...' is closely similar to the formula 'I warn you that...'--a formula which, as we put it, serves to make explicit what speech-act it is that we are performing; and also, that one can't issue any utterance whatever without performing some speech-act of this kind.³⁶

Yet it seems evident that whatever follows "I state that..." will be a constative utterance, therefore simply true or false. But in consideration of such cases as "I advise you that..." or "I warn you that..." or "I find the accused guilty", it soon becomes apparent that questions such as whether the advice is right, the warning appropriate, or the verdict fair, are important. And their importance derives from their fundamental involvement in a confrontation with the facts. There is no single simple assessment of "true" or "false" here (is there ever?); but there are whole dimensions of criticism which include, besides the "facts", "...the situation of the speaker, his purpose in speaking, his hearer, questions of precision, etc."³⁷ Thus, in what seemed to be a clear-cut investigation of truth and falsity, "...we feel ourselves driven to think again about the Performative-Constative antithesis."³⁸ The two dimensions are not exclusive and watertight, and philosophers may have been guilty of creating an illusion by concentrating on cases of ideal simplicity.

If we are content to restrict ourselves to statements of an idiotic or ideal simplicity, we shall never succeed in disentangling the true from the just, fair, deserved, precise, exaggerated, etc., the summary and the detail, the full and concise, and so on.³⁹

Austin's book, *How to do Things with Words*, is liable to be

misunderstood if it is regarded as an elucidation of a bipartite classification of the uses of language. If viewed in this way the whole work becomes an inglorious retreat from such a classification. Rather, the work is an attempt to elucidate the performative and constative *dimensions* of speech-acts in general; and Austin, as has been seen, is the first to admit that none of his tests and classifications is really successful. He initially stresses supposedly paradigm cases (e.g., "I promise" as a paradigm performative) only to establish at the outset a clear conceptual point. But he never fails to find flaws in his distinctions, and his conclusions at the Royaumont conference in 1958 indicate his anticipation of the outcome of future investigations of the problem:

What we need, perhaps, is a more general theory of these speech-acts, and in this theory our constative-performative antithesis will scarcely survive.⁴⁰

References

- ¹J.L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words*, edited by J.O. Urmson (London: O.U.P., 1962) p. 45.
- ²Reproduced on pp.16 of this thesis.
- ³The analysis here follows the conditions A.1, A.2, B.1, B.2, Γ .1, and Γ .2 listed by Austin in *How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.
- ⁴*Ibid.*, p. 45.
- ⁵*Ibid.*
- ⁶*Ibid.*, p. 47.
- ⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 47-52.
- ⁸*Ibid.*, p. 53.
- ⁹*Ibid.*, p. 55.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 72n.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 72.
- ¹²*Ibid.*
- ¹³I.e., one whose "sole pretension is to be true or false, and which is not liable to criticism in any other dimension." *Ibid.*, p. 72.
- ¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 73.
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*
- ¹⁶*Ibid.*
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 76.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 69-70. See also "Performative Utterances," in J.L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers* (London: O.U.P., 1961) p. 232; "Performative-Constative" in Charles E. Caton, *Philosophy and Ordinary Language* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963) p. 26.

²³*How to do Things with Words, op. cit.*, p. 63

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 64.

²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 59.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 79.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰Austin cautions that this alternative undermines his second test. *Ibid.*, p. 80n.1.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 80.

³²*Ibid.*

³³*Ibid.*, p. 84.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵See "Truth," *Philosophical Papers, op. cit.*, pp. 97-101. Also, "Performative-Constative," Caton, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

³⁶"Performative-Constative," Caton, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 33.

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 31.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPEECH-ACT (I)

The Need for a Different Approach

It seems apparent, from an examination of Austin's earlier grapplings with the problem of performatives, that a wholly new approach to the matter is necessary. The performative-constative antithesis holds only as a vague conceptual contrast, but has not withstood closer logical scrutiny. Attempts to elucidate more fully the concept of a performative utterance have led Austin into considerations of truth, and attempts to elucidate more fully the contrasting case of the constative utterance have become involved with issues of felicity.

In particular, the explicit performative formula seemed to have revealed the essential elements of the performative utterance. The essential asymmetry between the explicit performative formula and other persons, moods and tenses of the conjugation seemed to be the definitive test. However, as was noted, none of the tests associated with the explicit form served to distinguish "I state" from performatives such as "I promise"--a distinction which seems necessary if the performative-constative antithesis is to be sustained. Austin finally rejected the idea that the antithesis could be sustained, at least in the form considered so far. The original notion of the performative utterance, derived from a study of the peculiarities of several highly developed examples, has led to a closer scrutiny of less highly developed types, and of utterances, which, at first glance, seemed to lack these peculiarities. In virtually all cases so scrutinised, some of the peculiarities.

iarities of the original performative notion are apparent.

Up to this stage in his analysis, Austin has been considering the performative utterance in the sense of "to say something is to do something" or "the saying of something is the doing of something." Since this approach, it appears, has been rather unsuccessful, he turns his attention to a consideration of the more general senses in which "to say something may be to do something, or *in* saying something we do something...and also...*by* saying something we do something."¹ The first of these, the act *of* saying something (in the full normal sense of "say") he calls the *locutionary act*. The act performed *in* saying something he calls the *illocutionary act*, and the act performed *by* saying something is the *perlocutionary act*. The locutionary act is elucidated first.

Issuing an Utterance

Admitting that the notion of "saying something" and the notion of "doing something" are vague, Austin elucidates the various senses in which "issuing an utterance" is always doing something. Thus, to say anything is always to do something, and this analysis is directed towards the idea of "saying something" in the full normal sense of "say".

We may agree, without insisting on formulations or refinements, that to say anything is

- (A.a) always to perform the act of uttering certain noises (a phonetic act) and the utterance a phone;
- (A.b) always to perform the act of uttering certain vocables or words, i.e., noises of certain types belonging to *and as* belonging to a certain vocabulary, in a certain construction, i.e., conforming to *and as* conforming to a certain grammar, with a certain intonation, &c. This act we may call a 'phatic' act and the utterance which it is the act of uttering a 'pheme' ...; and,

(A.c) generally to perform the act of using that pheme or its constituents with a certain more or less definite 'sense' and more or less definite 'reference' (which together are equivalent to 'meaning'). This act we may call a rhetic act, and the utterance which it is the act of uttering a 'rheme'.²

Now, *saying something*, provided the above criteria are met, is performing a locutionary act.³ The issuing of statements, along with other types of utterance, is therefore to be regarded as (at least) the performance of locutionary acts. Statements may be regarded as true or false, but *the utterance of them* is not true or false: it is an *act*. At the level of locutionary acts, one is simply saying something (which is doing something) but at the level of illocutionary acts⁴ one is doing something *more than just saying something*. That is to say, one is making a truth-claim ("I state that...") or making a promise ("I promise that ...") etc., and the distinction between them is a difference in the nature of illocutionary act performed, e.g., between stating and promising. This distinction needs to be borne in mind, and in particular it should be remembered that Austin incorporates "I state that..." *and* "I promise that..." into the class of illocutionary acts. Max Black seems to try to reject this procedure of Austin's, and attempts to confine statements to the class of "self-labelling utterances"⁵ (i.e., locutions). He allows only the more obvious performatives to be incorporated into the class of "Performatives_A".⁶ However, he fails to realise that making a truth claim is just as much a matter of illocutionary force as making a promise; and "I promise" is just as much a self-labelling utterance as "I state". Black's whole purpose in setting up his categories of "Performative_A", "Performative_B" and "Constative"

seems to be to preserve an antithesis which Austin himself had clearly rejected. Furthermore, the above criticisms obfuscate any distinctions between Black's "Performative_A" and "Performative_B". Black tries to substantiate this distinction by referring to the case of "I say" and suggesting that anyone who says "I say..." could not be doing anything more than saying something true or false.⁷ It is difficult to sustain this because, for example, "I say he should be whipped" is clearly a case of someone using the "I say..." formula to say something which is not true or false. Black eventually has to abandon his distinctions for the very same reasons Austin abandoned his.⁸ And he is led, eventually, to think of "the performative-constative contrast as dealing with *aspects* of utterances, rather than with mutually exclusive *classes* of utterances,"⁹ a point for which he does not give Austin prior credit.¹⁰ Yet, Black, even after coming to this insight, still seems to think the whole venture fails because he is "unable to make the performative-constative distinction or anything else that will replace it."¹¹ Austin himself indicates that all utterances are performative "in all senses relevant."¹² And Black reluctantly agrees with him because he sees "the only proper unit for investigation to be...an illocutionary act."¹³

What Austin was no doubt aware of (but failed to elaborate on) is that "true-false" is liable, in many instances, to be regarded as a function solely of sense and reference, and is therefore liable to be considered in relation only to the rheme, while illocutionary force is taken to be a function of the circumstances of the utterance, and is somehow entirely different as a dimension of consideration. The pitfalls of this view are many and dangerous. All of the acts listed by

Austin are abstractions,¹⁴ and the "more general theory" Austin envisages is a theory of "the total speech-act in the total speech situation."¹⁵ Truth and illocutionary force are just two of the major dimensions of criticism to be taken into account in this theory, and whilst some elementary distinctions can be made at the rhetic and illocutionary levels, there still remains to be examined the more complex considerations of their admixture and interrelationship within the total speech situation. Considerations of *meaning* which are restricted to the rhetic or locutionary level are simplified conceptualisations which are convenient, but perhaps not accurate. Austin distinguishes between meaning and force (in the same way it was necessary to distinguish between sense and reference within meaning¹⁶) but, it will be contended, considerations of *truth* necessarily involve examination of meaning and force *together*.

What Black, and others¹⁷, seem to have disregarded is the fact that Austin agreed that the "deceptively simple constative-performative distinction should be abandoned in favour of a more general distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts"¹⁸ and "the old distinction between constatives and performatives becomes a distinction *within* the class of illocutionary acts"¹⁹ (emphasis added). As Austin put it, "stating and describing...are...*just two* names among a great many others for illocutionary acts; they have no unique position."²⁰

It seems, then, that the locutionary act is to be taken as the act of saying something "in the full normal sense of 'say,'" and the illocutionary act (to be more fully examined in the next chapter) as the act of doing something *in* saying something, which is more than *just* saying something. The "more than" may equally well be a "paradigm"

performative, e.g., promising, or a not-so-obvious performative, e.g., making a truth-claim. That is, the entire notion of performatives is absorbed by the new notion of illocutionary force. As has been noted, several writers have tended to assume that Austin left the constative part of his performative-constative distinction to be subsumed under the new notion of the locutionary act, and developed the performative part of that distinction into the general doctrine of illocutionary acts. However, it should be remembered that the notion of the constative included considerations of truth and falsity, and as indicated earlier, these considerations (it will be argued) involve further considerations of illocutionary force. Thus, it is to be contended that the notion of the constative is *not* entirely subsumed under the new notion of the locutionary act.

The reasons for this common misunderstanding seem to lie in Austin's puzzling notions about the rhetic act as

...the act of using (a) pheme or its constituents with a certain more or less definite 'sense' and more or less definite 'reference' (which together are equivalent to 'meaning').²¹

He defines the phatic act as

...the act of using certain vocables or words, i.e., noises of certain types belonging to *and as* belonging to a certain vocabulary, in a certain construction, i.e., conforming to *and as* conforming to a certain grammar, with a certain intonation, &c.²²

But he also says

(T)he pheme is a unit of *language*: its typical fault is to be nonsense--meaningless. But the rheme is a unit of *speech*: its typical fault is to be vague or void or obscure.²³

Now, since Austin equates 'meaning' with 'sense' and 'reference' it seems logical to suppose that 'meaningless' involves the absense of sense and reference. But the pheme *lacks* sense and reference by definition, i.e., the pheme is distinguished from the rheme by the sole addition of sense and reference to the latter. Consequently, it appears that Austin cannot charge the pheme with the typical *fault* of being meaningless: it seems that it *is* meaningless by his own definition.

Once Austin allows the pheme as being composed of "vocables or words...conforming to a certain grammar...belonging to a certain vocabulary", etc., he is committed to the admission of some elements of meaning (at least some elements of sense) within the pheme. Further, if "He said 'the cat is on the mat'" reports a phatic act (and it does, according to Austin), then we cannot charge the pheme so reported with lacking sense. Of course, the sense may be a little tricky, but it is certainly not a case of *nonsense* as Austin would have to admit if it lacked meaning. The words reported in the pheme *do* have sense, in as much as they are recognisable *as words* which could be used to refer to reasonably restricted classes of objects, i.e., cats and mats. Which particular cat or which particular mat are dubious matters but this indicates lack of reference, not sense. The fact that one could intelligently ask the question "To which cat (or mat) was he referring?" shows that the pheme is not entirely devoid of sense, and surely indicates that the report of the phatic act could not be nonsense. As Austin says, to be nonsense would be its typical *fault*.

Further, if phemes are composed of vocables or words which belong to a certain grammar and vocabulary, then presumably one could compile

a dictionary of such vocables or words. Would such a dictionary differ in important respects from an ordinary dictionary? In respect of grammar there would be marked similarity. Both dictionaries would provide a grammatical description of the word or vocable, i.e., they would be listed as nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. (Of course, the 'phatic' dictionary may have different organising principles from the Oxford English Dictionary, but it still remains that it takes cognisance of a grammar). If the phatic vocable "cat" were not listed as a noun (or a noun-equivalent in another grammar), the rhetic uses of that vocable which have reference to *a cat* would be outlawed. More importantly, if the vocables or words belong to, and are to be used *as belonging to* a certain vocabulary, then their meaning is at least partly established. They do not belong to a mere list: they belong to a *vocabulary*. A vocabulary is a list of words which has been compiled in accordance with some organising principles, such principles governing the including of certain words (and the exclusion of others), and also governing the way in which the words are to be differentiated one from another. The most usual mark of differentiation is based on definition, but other criteria may also be used, e.g., scope of allowable or recorded usage, range of various senses, various possibilities of reference, and various forms of operation within the limits imposed by the syntax. Thus a vocabulary requires underlying principles of organisation, and these consist, in the main, of definition, scope of usage, and grammatical criteria. In principle, there would be no important differences between an ordinary dictionary and a dictionary of phatic vocables or words. To all intents and purposes, Webster's dictionary *is* a dictionary of

phatic vocables.

Consequently, it seems necessary to amend Austin's concept of the pheme so that it is taken to have at least some sense, in order to make his definition of the pheme compatible with his later assertions about it.

Phemes, Rhemes and Locutions

Austin says that "He said 'the cat is on the mat'" reports a phatic act, and "He said that the cat was on the mat" reports a rhetic act.²⁵ He generalises this to the effect that rhetic acts are reported in indirect speech and phatic acts in direct speech.²⁶ Further, the phatic act is essentially mimicable in so far as one can mimic not only the utterance but also its various accompaniments such as gestures intonation, etc.²⁷ When one is reporting an utterance "whose sense or reference is *not* being taken as clear"²⁸ the utterance (or part of it) is reported in quotation marks.

This seems to be a retreat from the position of regarding the pheme as lacking meaning. Austin now seems to hold only that one *reports* an utterance whose meaning is not clear as a phatic act, whereas if the meaning *is* clear, one reports it as a rhetic act. Now, if someone says "The cat is on the mat" and I, for some reason, do not catch his meaning, then I will probably report this utterance as "He said 'the cat is on the mat'", i.e., I will report it as a phatic act. On the other hand, if I understand what he means, I am likely to report it as "He said that the cat was on the mat", i.e., I will report it as a rhetic act. But the emphasis has now changed from (a) what the utterance (or the utterer)²⁹ means, to (b) how well its (or his) meaning

is caught by the hearer. And we are now at a loss to say whether the utterance *itself* was rhetic or phatic. If there are two people present who hear the utterance, one may catch the meaning and subsequently report it rhetically, and the other may not catch the meaning and subsequently report it phatically. And each will be right (apparently) depending on whether "the sense and reference is being taken as clear" in each case. The dilemma is this: virtually any utterance may be a rheme to one person and a pheme to another. Whether it is a pheme or a rheme seems to depend on what the hearer *takes it to be*, and this depends on whether or not the meaning is clear to the hearer. Thus, it could well turn out that there is no test to determine whether a particular utterance is a rhetic act or a phatic act, except by reference to hearers' opinions. The unfortunate consequence of this is that the speaker is not in a position to know which act he has performed. This seems to be an extremely odd position to have arrived at in the analysis of what it is "to say something in the full normal sense of 'say'."

However, the mistake appears to be in taking Austin's equation of 'sense' and 'reference' with 'meaning' too simply. Austin says that 'meaning' is equivalent to 'more or less *definite* sense *together with* more or less *definite* reference'³⁰ (emphasis added). The words "definite" and "together" may be crucial to an understanding of what Austin is getting at. His statement beginning "...If the sense or reference is *not* being taken as clear..." perhaps needs to be interpreted as

(i) *either* the sense *or* the reference is not 'more or less definite; or,

(ii) the conjunction of sense and reference ('together') results in a contingency of meaning or an ambiguity of some sort (e.g., if I call the cat "Fido".)

These views would allow Austin to accept the notion of sense and/or reference being present in the pheme (though perhaps not definite, nor, perhaps, together) as has been argued.

Of course, there is a difference--and it is an important one--between *my performing* a phatic act and *my utterance being reported as* a phatic act. To perform a phatic act (which is *just* phatic and not rhetic) I am required to issue an utterance which consists of a string of words belonging to and conforming to certain grammar and vocabulary, but there must be a flaw of some sort in the definite sense together with the definite reference such that my act is not rhetic. My utterance must be mimicable or reproducible, but not translatable into indirect speech, i.e., not amenable to being reported in any form other than direct and faithful reproduction. My phatic act would be recognised by my hearer (*other things being equal*) as familiar words in a familiar construction (i.e., as Austin says, "cat thoroughly the if" or "the slithy toves did gyre" are not phatic³¹). My hearer could tell someone else what I *said*, but he could not tell them what I *meant*. He could say what the individual words mean (he could give a dictionary definition for each one) and he could analyse the grammar of my utterance (into, say, its subject and predicate). Further, it seems that I, the utterer, would also be unable to say what I meant, because I did not definitely mean anything. The possibility of issuing an utterance which is purely and simply a pheme,

therefore, seems (in normal speech situations) unlikely: it necessarily involves an outrage of language. The utterance of a pheme (e.g., someone who is ignorant of Latin reading a Latin sentence) *may* secure communication, but if it does so, it is by accident--because whatever meaning is conveyed to the hearer was not known to the speaker.

However, it is very often the case that my issuing an utterance which is rhetic (and therefore a locutionary act)³² will result in a misunderstanding on the part of my hearer, and he, in turn, would report it as a phatic act. This does not mean that my utterance *was* merely a pheme. Circumstances may be such that, although *I* know what I said and what I meant, my hearer only knows what I *said* and not what I meant.

Similarly, even if my hearer does understand what I said, he may, for various reasons, report it phatically instead of rhetically.

In the performance of a locutionary act I have not outraged language but, for some reasons or another, there has been a breakdown of communication, or interest fastens on what I said rather than what I meant or was taken to mean. This seems to be a more satisfactory way of approaching the difference between the locutionary act and the phatic act. The phatic act is conceived as an abstraction³³ from the locutionary act. It is, in a sense, the minimum of communication in a situation where both parties know the language of the utterance, but do not understand, yet *could* ask "What do you mean?" In order to be able to ask the question "What do you mean?" one needs to have recognised *something* of the meaning - i.e., one anticipates that he will understand something of the reply. My first hearing of a Dylan Thomas

poem may well result in my regarding it as a phatic act. I recognise the vocabulary and the grammar, but I do not know what it is all about. After much study, I may, if I am lucky, come to understand much of it, and I could then tell someone what it is all about, i.e., I could report it rhetically (whereas, initially, I would only have been able to recite it). Thus, I eventually come to regard it as a full locutionary act. But it *was* a locutionary act all the time, and my initial conception of it as a phatic act was a conception of only part of it--the bare minimum of communication abstracted from the rest, which enabled me to search for the rest of the meaning.

Summary

Beginning with the concept of "saying something" in the full normal sense of "say", it is possible to abstract the following:

(i) The phonetic act, which is the uttering of certain noises, (phones);

(ii) The phatic act, which is the act of uttering certain words or vocables conforming to a certain grammar and a certain vocabulary, together with the fundamental elements of sense and/or reference necessary for such grammar and such vocabulary to have organising principles; such utterance being, along with accompanying gestures and intonation, essentially mimicable or reproducible, though not translatable into reports other than direct reproduction because of a lack of more or less definite sense together with more or less definite reference (phemes);

(iii) The locutionary act, which is the utterance of a pheme with

more or less definite sense together with more or less definite reference such that the utterance is translatable through reporting in indirect speech.

The locutionary act is the act of saying something in the sense in which "saying anything" normally involves certain minimum requirements of meaningfulness and success in communication. The locutionary act may be regarded as the minimum possible unit of speech (although this notion will be questioned in the next chapter).

The pheme is an abstraction which is useful on certain occasions. Where, for example, the process of communication through locutionary acts is not satisfactory, or interpretation is in doubt, the utterance may be reported as a pheme. (In law court counsel will often ask the witness to repeat the defendant's own words.) Also, when considerations of the utterance being regarded as an historic event are to be ruled out for some purpose or other, and it is desirable to examine the *language* of the utterance rather than the utterance itself then phatic form may be more appropriate.

People do not normally issue utterances which are merely phonetic or phatic: though, for various reasons, their utterances may be reported or examined as phonetic or phatic acts.

The pheme's typical fault is to be nonsense in so far as the rules of grammar and vocabulary are liable to infractions, the modicum of sense and reference implicit in such rules being relevant to the infractions. The typical fault of the locutionary act is to be vague or void or obscure, in which case the conventions of employing more or less definite sense together with more or less definite reference are

liable to violations of various kinds. (This notion of conventions at the locutionary level in relation to sense and reference--a notion more usually associated with illocutionary dimensions--will be closely examined in the next chapter.)

When a purported locutionary act is deficient in the above respects it is liable to be reported as a phatic act; and when a purported phatic act is deficient in the respects indicated above, it is liable to be reported as a phonetic act.

The matter which now needs to be examined is the relation between the locutionary act and the illocutionary act, particularly with respect to the dimensions of meaning and force which affect the truth and falsity of utterances.

References

- ¹J.L.Austin, *How to do Things with Words*, (London: O.U.P., 1962) p. 91.
- ²*Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.
- ³*Ibid.*, p. 94.
- ⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 98ff. The concept of illocutionary acts will be more fully discussed in the next chapter.
- ⁵Max Black, "Austin on Performatives", *Philosophy*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 145, 1963, p. 220.
- ⁶"An utterance is said to be *Performative_A* when used in specified circumstances, if and only if its being so used counts as a case of the speaker's doing something other than, or something more than saying something true or false." *Ibid.*, p. 219. Also, "An utterance of the form 'I X (such and such)' is said to be *Performative_B*, when used in specified circumstances, if and only if its being so used counts as a case of the speaker's thereby X-ing." *Ibid.*, p. 220.
- ⁷*Ibid.*
- ⁸*Ibid.*, p. 221.
- ⁹*Ibid.*, p. 223.
- ¹⁰There is surely enough evidence in Austin's works to give him credit for having made this point long before Black. See *How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91, 134-135, 147; "Performative-Constatative" in Charles E. Caton, *Philosophy and Ordinary Language*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963) pp. 34-35, 37, 43; and "Performative Utterances" in *Philosophical Papers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 237, 238.
- ¹¹Black, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
- ¹²*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 103n.
- ¹³Black, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

- ¹⁴*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 146.
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 142. Also, "Performative-Constative", in Caton, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
- ¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 100.
- ¹⁷For example, Mats Furberg, *Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts*, (Gothenburg: Gothenburg Studies in Philosophy I, 1963).
- ¹⁸Tore Nordenstam, "On Austin's Theory of Speech-Acts", *Mind*, Vol. LXXV, No. 297, January, 1966, p. 141.
- ¹⁹Walter Cerf, "How to do Things with Words" (Critical Notice), *Mind*, Vol. LXXV, No. 298, April, 1966, p. 264.
- ²⁰*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-148.
- ²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.
- ²²*Ibid.*, p. 92.
- ²³*Ibid.*, p. 98.
- ²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 95.
- ²⁵*Ibid.*
- ²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 96.
- ²⁷*Ibid.*
- ²⁸*Ibid.*
- ²⁹It is not suggested that the difference between what the utterer means and what the utterance means is unimportant. On the contrary, such a distinction is extremely important. But the present point is that the above considerations have obliterated *either* point of view in favour of the hearer's perspective as the decisive factor.
- ³⁰*How to do Things with Words.*, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 96.

³²There seems to be no good reason to preserve any distinction between a rhetic act and a locutionary act.

³³*How to do Things with Words, op. cit.*, p. 146.

CHAPTER V

THE SPEECH-ACT (II)

The Illocutionary Act

Austin says "to perform a locutionary act is in general ...also and *eo ipso* to perform an *illocutionary* act."¹ The way in which the locution is being used will determine what illocutionary act it is, e.g., asking a question, giving information, announcing a verdict, etc.² He hastily modifies the awkward notion of "using a locution"³ so that the determination of what illocutionary act is performed is seen as a matter of what kind of *force* the locution has, or *how the locution ought to be taken*.⁴ He refers to "this doctrine of the different types of function of language...as the doctrine of illocutionary forces."⁵ He distinguishes force from meaning "in the sense in which meaning is equivalent to sense and reference [*sic*], just as it has become essential to distinguish sense and reference within meaning."⁶ He deplores the inadequacy of the expression "uses of language" because we may entirely

...clear up the 'use of a sentence' on a particular occasion, in the sense of the locutionary act, without yet touching upon its use in the sense of an *illocutionary* act.⁷

Further, phrases such as "the use of language for arguing or warning" and "the use of language for persuading, rousing, alarming" look alike, but they fail to show the distinction between illocutionary acts (e.g., arguing or warning--a matter of force) and *perlocutionary* acts (e.g., persuading or alarming--a matter of consequences⁸).⁹ This

distinction emphasises that the consequences of perlocutionary acts "are really consequences"¹⁰ while "the illocutionary act is a conventional act: an act done as conforming to a convention,"¹¹ and consequential effects are only "conventional consequences."¹² Thus, when I invoke the conventional procedure of promising, it is a conventional consequence that I am committed by my promise (illocutionary); but if I want to convince someone of something--no matter how I do it--my success or failure in the matter depends entirely on the real outcome of whether or not he is convinced (perlocutionary). In other words, "being convinced" is a normal, "real" state to be in,¹³ but being committed by one's promise is a conventional consequence of having invoked the conventional procedure of promising.

Austin exemplifies the differences between the locutionary, perlocutionary and illocutionary acts thus:

- (i) A. *Locution*: He said to me 'Shoot her!' meaning by 'shoot' shoot and referring by 'her' to *her*.
 B. *Illocution*: He urged (or advised, ordered &c) me to shoot her.
 C. *Perlocution*: (a) He persuaded me to shoot her.
 (b) He got me to (or made me &c) shoot her.
- (ii) A. *Locution*: He said to me 'You can't do that'.
 B. *Illocution*: He protested against my doing it.
 C. *Perlocution*: (a) He pulled me up, checked me.
 (b) He stopped me, he brought me to my senses,
 &c. He annoyed me.¹⁴

The reporting of the locutionary act in direct speech in each of these examples is to be questioned in terms of Austin's previous claim that a phatic act is the act so reported.¹⁵ The rhetic act was said to be reportable in indirect speech, and since the locutionary act is the

three-in-one act (i.e., phonetic, phatic and rhetic), then its rhetic aspect should allow for it to be reported in indirect speech. Thus, translating the above examples into indirect speech reports, example (i)A becomes "He said that I was to (should, ought to) shoot her" or "He said to shoot her", and example (ii)A becomes "He said that I couldn't do it."

However, if the locutionary acts are reported in this way, it seems that they become liable to dimensions of analysis which could be regarded as illocutionary. Thus, it seems that the *force* of "He said I should shoot her" is more explicit than "He said to me 'Shoot her!'" Even if we change the indirect report to "He told me to shoot her" then the locution is revealed as one of *telling*, i.e., the illocutionary act of telling comes into prominence in the report. Obviously, the locutionary act should, in this case, be reported as a locutionary act and any indication in the report of the illocutionary act would mean that it is not a report (simply) of a locutionary act. In the case of the direct speech report "He said to be 'Shoot her!'" it does not seem possible to translate this report into indirect speech form without revealing something of the illocutionary force. Indirect reports in these cases tend to become "said I should..." or "said to..." or "told me that..."--all of which reveal something of the illocutionary aspect.

In example (ii) the indirect report of "He said to me 'You can't do that'" is "He said I couldn't do it", in which case the "said I couldn't" part seems very close to the "said to..." or "told me..." formulas mentioned above, and hence is to be suspected (at least) of

revealing illocutionary aspects in the report of the alleged locution.

The Distinction between Locutionary Acts and Illocutionary Acts

This phenomenon--specifically, the tendency for illocutionary aspects to be introduced when locutionary acts are reported in indirect speech--is not common to all cases. For example, the direct report of someone saying "I promise" is "He said 'I promise'" and the corresponding indirect report--"He promised"-- is a report of the illocutionary act. However, the indirect report corresponding to "He said 'I didn't do it'", *viz.*, "He said he didn't do it" does not superficially seem to introduce reports of illocutionary considerations. Admittedly, reports such as "He *claimed* he didn't do it", "He *denied* doing it" or "He *swore* he didn't do it" capture more of the specific nature of the illocutionary force, but it may be argued that the "He said that..." formula is not always devoid of illocutionary indications. Austin says that to perform a locutionary act is also "and *eo ipso* to perform an illocutionary act."¹⁶ This means that, ("parasitic" uses of language and "etiologies" excepted)¹⁷, whenever one issues an utterance under normal circumstances, one also and *eo ipso* performs an illocutionary act, i.e., one does something more than just say something. It is not surprising, therefore, that indirect reports of utterances, even when couched in the seemingly innocuous "He said that..." formula, seem to capture something of the illocutionary dimensions of the utterance so reported.

The central point of the matter seems to be that one cannot perform a locutionary act which is simply a locutionary act and nothing

more. To do so would be to utter an ideal statement, and "the traditional statement is an abstraction, an ideal, and so is its traditional truth and falsity."¹⁸ Many philosophical inquiries into the nature of statements have been inquiries into this abstraction (or ideal) and have not taken account of the *utterance* of statements. Whatever the ontology of the ideal statement may be, the fact remains that when statements are uttered in normal circumstances, their utterance is part of a total speech situation. They are uttered, not just to "say something" (for that would be a non-normal speech situation), but to inform, to tell, to describe, to make known, etc. Thus, the locutionary act is always an abstraction. This may be the key to the problem of illocutionary aspects creeping into what purport to be reports of locutionary acts.

Phatic acts are always reportable in direct speech:

<u>Utterance</u>	<u>Report of Phatic Act</u>
I promise	He said "I promise".
I didn't do it.	He said "I didn't do it".
Water is denser than oil.	He said "Water is denser than oil".
I won't come.	He said "I won't come".

Illocutionary acts are always reportable in indirect speech, where the reporting verb is the name of the illocutionary act performed:

<u>Utterance</u>	<u>Report of Illocutionary Act</u>
I promise.	He promised.
I didn't do it.	He claimed he didn't do it.

<u>Utterance</u>	<u>Report of Illocutionary Act (Cont'd.)</u>
Water is denser than oil.	He stated that water was denser than oil.
I won't come.	He refused to come.

Locutionary acts, however, present some difficulties in reporting:

<u>Utterance</u>	<u>Report of Locutionary Act</u>
I promise.	?
I didn't do it.	He said that he didn't do it.
Water is denser than oil.	He said that water was denser than oil.
I won't come.	He said that he wouldn't come.

There is no locutionary act reportable in a "He said that..." formula in the case of reporting someone's utterance "I promise". The fact that it is reportable phatically indicates that the words and the construction pass the tests of grammar and vocabulary. But if it is not reportable rhetically--and it is not--then does this mean that it is devoid of "more or less definite sense together with more or less definite reference"? Surely not: "promise" clearly means *promise* and "I" clearly refers to the speaker. Yet if we cannot report what locutionary act is performed over and above the phatic act, how can we say that a locutionary act is performed at all. Thus, we seem to be in the awkward position of having to say that the utterance "I promise" may be regarded as a phatic act reportable in the form "He said 'I promise'", and that it may also be regarded as an illocutionary act reportable in the form "He promised", but that it has no rhetic meaning, since there is no rhetic (or locutionary) "He said that..."

formula applicable. That is, there is no further *meaning* to be accounted for other than the *force* of promising and the modicum of sense and reference at the phatic level. Yet such an account seems to be seriously at odds with the obvious fact that "I promise" *does* have "more or less definite sense together with more or less definite reference".

Illocutionary Force, Convention and Meaning

Comparison of the "He said 'p'" formula with the "He said that p" formula may reveal some important differences in terms of locutionary and illocutionary aspects of utterances. Presumably, "He said 'p'" reports a phatic act, "He said that p" reports a locutionary act, and "He stated that p" reports an illocutionary act. But the "He said that p" formula, when given as a report, indicates that the meaning of what was said was caught. Consider this conversation:

Mother: Will you help me dry the dishes, Johnny?
 Johnny: No.
 Father: What did he say?
 Mother: He said that he wouldn't help me dry the dishes.

Clearly, at the phatic level, Johnny said no such thing as Mother reported him. Mother did not report his locutionary act, either. She reported his illocutionary act. (She could have reported him thus: "He refused to help me dry the dishes", making the illocutionary act more explicit.) The important thing is that Mother's report not only catches the *meaning* of Johnny's reply: it also catches the *force*, in the sense that it indicates *how Johnny's utterance was taken*. (We may presume that it was taken in the way it ought to have been taken.)

One might be tempted to argue, perhaps,¹⁹ that "No" and "I won't help you dry the dishes" are rhetically equivalent, even though they are different phatic acts. But how can they be rhetically equivalent if they do not have the same sense and reference? Surely the *meaning* ('more or less definite sense together with more or less definite reference') of "No" is not the same as the *meaning* of "I won't help you dry the dishes". What *is* equivalent about the two utterances is their *force*, or the way in which they are to be taken.

Now, when there is no locutionary formula ("He said that p") corresponding to a phatic formula ("He said 'p'"), are we to conclude that there is no meaning? Surely "No" and "I promise"--the two instances which reveal this lack of a locutionary formula--are not meaningless. The only other possibility, it seems, is that the *meaning* is entirely (apart from the modicum of sense and reference at the phatic level) a matter of *force*. There is, in each case, a corresponding illocutionary formula, *viz.*, "In saying 'No' he was thereby refusing to help dry the dishes", and "In saying 'I promise' he was thereby promising."²⁰ When Johnny said "No" he was *answering* Mother's question and *refusing* to help dry the dishes. Outside of such specifiable contexts, the utterance "No" is devoid of meaning beyond the phatic (i.e., grammar and vocabulary) level. Yet within such contexts we would not be inclined to call it meaningless, as Mother's report clearly shows. The point is that its meaning is *entirely dependent upon* (or, *is*) its illocutionary force within the context. Similarly, when I say "I promise" my utterance cannot be reported in a locutionary ("He said that p") formula, yet my utterance cannot be said to be meaningless. It is

rather the case that, since there is an illocutionary formula for reporting my utterance ("He promised"), the super-phatic meaning²¹ of "I promise" depends entirely on the illocutionary force, or how the utterance is to be taken.

"Arabella is ill" and "She is sick", when both refer to Arabella and her physical state, may be regarded as different phatic acts, but rhetically equivalent. But utterances such as "No" and "I won't help you dry the dishes", which have no corresponding equivalence of rhetic meaning, cannot be said to be rhetically equivalent. They can only be said to be equivalent in the sense of the equivalence of illocutionary force which the context makes clear. But since it is the very equivalence of illocutionary force which determines that they are not meaningless, it seems reasonable to conclude that their meaning is dependent upon (or *is*) their illocutionary force.

Strawson²² distinguishes between utterances whose illocutionary force is exhausted by the meaning (i.e., the account of the meaning of the utterance leaves nothing further to be said about its illocutionary force) and utterances whose illocutionary force is not exhausted by the meaning.²³ Such a distinction does not allow for the conclusions reached above, and it seems that *either* there is a third distinction to be made, i.e., utterances whose meaning cannot be accounted for except in terms of force, *or*, the basis for making distinctions has to be changed to (i) utterances whose force exhausts the meaning, and (ii) utterances whose force does not exhaust the meaning. This view emphasises the force of the utterance as being primary to their meaning, and it could perhaps be argued that meaning is a function of force and

subject to it. Such a view seems more in accord with Austin's notion of the locutionary act as an abstraction, in so far as the "traditional 'statement' is an abstraction".²⁴ The perfect statement, the utterance of which would be the performance of a locutionary act, is an ideal towards which we aspire, and, perhaps, which we have come closest to achieving in science. But the ontology of statements is spurious apart from the occasion of their utterance, and considerations of statements in the context of the occasion of their utterance reveals that they are uttered to be taken in a certain way. The way in which the utterance is taken demands prior consideration to the "meaning" of the utterance, because the meaning--in Austin's rhetic sense-- is an abstraction from the total speech situation. Thus, if utterances such as "I apologise" were not regularly to be taken in a certain way (i.e., as apologising) they would have *no* meaning (i.e., the assertion that *I am apologising* would be meaningless because there would be no known act of apologising to which it could refer: this *is* meaningless and not just void like "The present King of France is bald", which simply *fails* to refer; "apologise", in the above circumstances, *could not possibly* refer.) Any meaning such utterances do have is entirely a function of the conventions established by their being regularly taken in the way they are intended to be taken: otherwise there could be no such thing as apologising.²⁵

Similarly, the utterance of statements--the conventional illocutionary act of stating--is demanding of prior consideration to the statements themselves, which are abstractions from the total speech situation. Unless there is a convention of such utterances being

regularly taken *as acts of stating* there could not be any concept of the meaning (or the truth or falsity) of such statements. The way in which the utterance is to be taken is primary, and this, through patterns of regularity in the way in which they *are* taken, establishes the conventions in speech. When I say "Water is denser than oil" my hearers take the utterance to be an act of stating simply because I have invoked the conventions of stating, and such invocation is successful in achieving the uptake of my hearers such that they take the utterance in the way it was intended to have been taken. It seems that Austin has this peculiar notion of convention in mind when he says

What we do import by the use of a nomenclature of illocution is a reference...to the conventions of illocutionary force as bearing on the special circumstances of the occasion of the issuing of the utterance.²⁶

Thus the conventions are the conventions which allow acts to be performed in the issuing of utterances. Promising, apologising, arguing, stating, describing, asserting, betting--all illocutionary acts--are conventional in the sense that there is a complex conventional procedure involving the issuing of an utterance in accordance with the special circumstances of the occasion. One could not promise, apologise, state, bet, assert, etc., unless there had been established certain conventions, the invocation of which through the issuing of appropriate utterances had a history of regularly securing the uptake necessary for the audience to know that such procedures were being invoked.

Austin's "Rhetic" Referring and Illocution

The above analysis calls for a reconsideration of the act of referring, which Austin calls "an ancillary act" at the rhetic level.²⁷ When one reports the phatic act in direct speech, one is reporting a part of the total speech act: but when attempts are made to report the locutionary act, such attempts as are in direct speech succeed in reporting only the phatic act, and such attempts as are in indirect speech elide into the illocutionary act. This is because the rhetic (= locutionary) act incorporates the "ancillary acts" of *referring* and *naming* (or using a word in a certain *sense*). These acts do not seem to be readily distinguishable from illocutionary acts. It seems fairly clear that referring, at least, is an illocutionary act (indeed, Austin lists it as an expositive along with 'mean', 'call', 'understand'²⁸).²⁹

Austin denies that the formula "In saying x I was y-ing" necessarily identifies the act of y-ing as an illocutionary act.³⁰ Whilst the latter part of his argument seems to substantiate this position, his first example is questionable. He says that the formula "In saying I detested Catholics I was referring only to the present day" is an instance of the y-ing act (i.e., referring) being an incidental part of the locutionary act.³¹ He *says* this is so: he does not *establish* that it is so. In fact, Austin seems here to be merely relying on the validity of his earlier assumption that referring is ancillary to the rhetic act. Whilst it is to be agreed that the formula "In saying x I was y-ing" does not always identify the y-ing act as an illocutionary act, it is not to be agreed that cases where the y-ing act is an act

of referring necessarily identify that act as ancillary to the rhetic act. The act of referring is just as much a conventional act as is the act of stating or apologising.

If I wish to *argue* that euthanasia is sinful, I usually *state* that such is the case during the course of my argument. Thus the act of stating is ancillary to the act of arguing, even though both acts are illocutionary. In stating that euthanasia is sinful I perform the act of referring by "euthanasia" to *euthanasia*, and to do this I invoke the conventions of referring which secure uptake in my audience in just the same way as my invocation of the conventions of stating secure comparable uptake. Thus, the act of referring is ancillary to the act of stating, but since comparable invocation of conventions is instanced in each case, there seems to be little reason to suppose that referring is other than an illocutionary act.

When statements are said to be false it is never the case that their falsity arises out of a *failure* in reference. "The present King of France is bald" fails to refer, but this does not result in a false statement.³² Failures in reference result in dimensions of criticism which relate to the felicity of the statement, and this is, as has been seen, of greater relevance to considerations of illocutionary force. If I say "The present King of France is bald" I cannot be held to have made a statement (in the traditional sense of a true or false constative utterance), but I can be held to have *purported* to make a statement. Although I have correctly invoked part of the conventions of stating (e.g., the grammatical subject-predicate form) I have not succeeded in invoking the conventions of referring with felicity. It

seems that the successful invocation of the conventions of referring is part of the more complex matter of the invocation of the conventions of stating, just as the invocation of the conventions of stating is part of the more complex matter of the invocation of the conventions of arguing.

The point being made here is that referring is an illocutionary act not simply because it consists of the invocation of conventions, but because the particular kind of conventions invoked by the act of referring--namely those conventions which ensure that the utterance in its appropriate context is taken *as it ought to be taken*--is the same kind of conventions that characterises illocutionary acts. In addition the act of referring to the same kind of explicit formula as other illocutionary acts. Thus, there seems to be no good reason for denying that the act of referring is an illocutionary act: As Austin says, it is an expositive.³³

The above relocation of the status of the act of referring in Austin's conception of the total speech act defends Austin from the arguments of L. Johnathan Cohen.³⁴ Cohen's demonstration of the "emptiness" of Austin's concept of illocutionary force is based on an over-emphasised distinction between force and meaning. Not only has Cohen overstressed the dichotomy much more than Austin seems to have intended, but his arguments depend, to a large degree, on this extreme separation of the two concepts. Thus, he argues that when "He caught a large one" is rendered explicit in the form "James landed a trout over ten pounds in weight", it is the sense and reference (= meaning) that is made explicit and not the force. Consequently, he asks,

What reason is there for supposing that it is illocutionary force, rather than meaning that has been rendered explicit in 'I warn you that your haystack is on fire' (as the explicit form of 'Your haystack is on fire')?³⁵

In the case of "He caught a large one" and "James landed a trout over ten pounds in weight", it seems obvious that these are (in Austin's sense) "rhetically" equivalent, because there is a correspondence of reference. However, as has been argued before, this rhetic equivalence derives from a correspondence in the illocutionary acts of referring in each case. Consequently, the partial rhetic equivalence between "Your haystack is on fire" and "I warn you that your haystack is on fire" derives, in part, from a similar correspondence of reference. (It could be held that the partial "equivalence" is really partial *identity*, deriving from identity of reference rather than equivalence of reference.) But it is only partial, since "I warn you that" has no equivalent in "Your haystack is on fire". This affects Cohen's argument in two serious ways.

Firstly, because rhetic equivalence holds *wholly* in his first example (i.e., between "He caught a large one" and "James landed a trout over ten pounds in weight") and *not wholly* in the second example (i.e., between "Your haystack is on fire" and "I warn you that your haystack is on fire"), there is no substantial analogic between the two examples. This means that Cohen cannot argue logically or analogically from his first example, where the explicit form of an utterance is wholly and completely rhetically equivalent to the inexplicit form, to his second example, where the explicit form of the utterance extends beyond the parallel rhetic equivalence (or identity) of the inex-

plicit form.

Secondly, if the meaning of an utterance is conceived as its sense and reference, and reference is an illocutionary act, then the utterance cannot be said to have meaning unless the act of referring is itself felicitous. Thus the meaning of an utterance is, in part at least, an outcome of the illocutionary force it has. It would be beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate the possibilities of "sense" being construed as a matter of illocutionary force in the same way as reference. But such an investigation, particularly in terms of the *act* of using a word in a certain sense (e.g., "In saying 'I sympathise with him', I was using the word 'sympathise' in the sense of 'sharing his sorrow'") may well lead to the entire subsumption of super-phatic meaning *within* the concept of illocutionary force. This would imply that the meaning of an utterance, like the locutionary act, would be an abstraction from the total speech-situation, just as the force of the utterance, like the illocutionary act, is an abstraction. Such a view is not seriously at odds with Austin's final position.³⁶ Thus, meaning and illocutionary force would be seen to be complementary and interdependent. The act of issuing an utterance in a speech situation is a matter of invoking the conventions of *saying something to be taken in a certain way*. This cannot be broken down, except for purposes of abstraction. The phatic act, reported in direct speech, abstracts the *something said* and ignores the force with which it was said. The illocutionary act, reported with a verb that names the act, abstracts the force with which the utterance was issued and ignores the *something said*. The locutionary act is an abstraction which has a foot in each

camp: it depends on the phatic act for the *limits* of its meaning, and it depends on the illocutionary act for the *explicitness* of its meaning. Just as the modicum of sense and reference in the pheme demarcates the range of senses and references of the locution, so the conventions of illocutionary force which bear upon the act of referring render the sense and reference of the locution more or less explicit. In other words, the pheme "The cat is on the mat" has potentiality to mean a reasonably restricted range of things: it is a unit of language which may be uttered within more or less restricted ranges of speech situations ('used'?). The illocutionary act of my being warned that *my cat is on my mother-in-law's new Persian rug* renders the meaning of the utterance both precise and explicit through the invocation of the conventions appropriate to the circumstances. But the illocutionary act does not warn me *in addition to* making the meaning precise and explicit: rendering the sense and reference explicit and precise is a *part of* the act of warning me. I cannot be said to have been warned unless, at the time of the warning *and as part of* the warning, I am brought to realise that *it is my cat on my mother-in-law's new Persian rug*. The only abstraction possible at the locutionary level is the dimension of criticism which relates to the adequacy of "correspondence with the facts". However, the question of this correspondence in the context of my having been warned (or informed, or told, etc.) only arises subsequent to my uptake of the acts of referring, naming, etc. Similarly, the scientist checks the adequacy of correspondence only after the reference of the postulation is rendered felicitous through being correctly invoked and uptaken. Failure to refer implies

failure to warn in just the same way as it implies failure to state or postulate. One cannot *just* state, postulate or warn any more than one can just be told, be warned or be threatened. One must state or postulate *something*, or warn someone *that something* is going to happen, be told or warned *about something* or threatened *that something will happen unless...*etc. And considerations of the total speech act in the total speech situation demand that the act of rendering clear the meaning of the (grammatical) object of the illocutionary verb be regarded as a part of the complex illocutionary act itself.

However, the act of referring, even when relocated in the schema as an illocutionary act, does seem to have a rather special status. It has been argued that, just as referring is ancillary to stating, so stating is ancillary to arguing. But referring is the one ancillary which is essential to all other illocutionary acts. If the utterance "The cat is on the mat" warns me that my cat is on my mother-in-law's new Persian rug, it does so *only because* the speaker's act of referring by "the cat" to my cat, and by "the mat" to my mother-in-law's new Persian rug, is uptaken by me. In just the same way, all illocutionary acts incorporate at least one act of reference; (even in the case of elliptical expressions, the reference is uptaken by the hearer in the sense of being "understood").

Now, this argument, along with two other considerations to be mentioned shortly, tends to undermine the idea of regarding the act of referring as an illocutionary act. In a sense, it seems, much of what has been said above may have to be taken back. But the fact remains that Austin himself came to regard referring as an illocutionary

act, and this has to be accounted for.

The ways in which the act of referring differs from other illocutionary acts are these: firstly, as indicated above, it is the only illocutionary act which is necessary for any other illocutionary act; secondly, unlike other illocutionary acts which are performed in the issuing of a whole utterance, referring is performed severally by *parts* of an utterance, i.e., the entire utterance "I promise to repay you tomorrow" is involved in the illocutionary act of promising, but parts of it ("I", "you", "tomorrow") are related to several acts of referring; thirdly, one never performs an illocutionary act of *just* referring.

In the light of these objections, it appears that referring cannot be happily classed as an ordinary illocutionary act: the differences are too great. However, it can be argued that the confusion arises out of two senses of the word "refer". There is a sense of "refer" in which one might ask "To what does *that* (i.e., word) refer?" and another sense in which one might ask "To what are *you* referring?" (In both cases, the word "mean" could also be used, i.e., I may ask you what the word "cat" means, or I may ask you what you mean by "cat".) The first sense seems to be a question that might be answered at the phatic level, as it could be answered from a dictionary. The second sense is an act of a person, and could not be answered from a dictionary, but could be answered by the person who performed the act. It is to be argued that the first sense is, to all intents and purposes, indistinguishable from phatic meaning, and the second sense is inextricable from illocutionary force. The answer to "To what does 'cat' refer?"

is an answer from a dictionary; the answer to "To what are you referring by 'cat'?" is an answer given by the person who uttered 'cat'. Thus, "refer" in the first sense is to be incorporated into the pheme as phatic meaning, and this is the sense in which logicians have been traditionally interested. "Refer" in the second sense is to be incorporated, *as an act of the utterer*, into the illocutionary act, and may be regarded as "super-phatic" meaning, and, as such, is a dimension of the illocutionary force of the utterance.

Why, then, is it necessary to relocate the act of referring in this second sense in the illocutionary act, and eliminate the rhetic act? It is not necessary; it is expedient. Where the super-phatic meaning of an utterance is varied, a different illocutionary act is performed *eo ipso*. It must be admitted that the same act of referring can be tied to the performance of different illocutionary acts (e.g., "You should not go" can be a warning, a piece of advice or a reprimand) but this does not affect the general position taken above, i.e., that *the particular acts of referring* in a given utterance are inseparable from *the particular* illocutionary act. The same illocutionary act may be performed in the issuing of rhetically equivalent utterances (e.g., I can issue the same act of warning in saying "Your haystack is on fire" or "The hay is burning") but not in rhetically inequivalent utterances. The same pheme may be used on different occasions for performing different illocutionary acts, although the different illocutionary acts will have different super-phatic meaning *eo ipso*. The matter may be summed up thus:

- (a) An illocutionary act is amenable to an explicit form "I x",

where *x* is always a transitive verb in the sense that it is always in order to ask "You *x* what?" Thus, I promise to *q*, I swear to *r*, I state that *p*, and so on, are all indications of the (grammatical) illocutionary object.

(b) An act of reference is performed by the speaker in the illocutionary object, whether such object is actually uttered or only understood by the hearer. This act of referring requires a response similar to the uptake of illocutionary force. This can be called, for the sake of convenience, "intake" of referential force. The correct intake of referential force is essential, with the uptake of illocutionary force, for the utterance to be taken in the way it is intended to be taken. Thus, if I say "I promise", my hearer can "uptake" the illocutionary force of promising, but unless he knows *what* I am promising, he will not, in any complete sense, take my utterance as it is intended. Similarly, in addition to knowing *that* I am acquitting, appointing, opposing, challenging or affirming (*uptake*), my hearer must also know --in a total speech situation--*whom* I am acquitting (and *of what charge*), *whom* I am appointing (and *to what position*), *what* or *whom* I am opposing, *what* or *whom* I am challenging (and *what for*) and *what* I am affirming (*intake*).³⁷

The Perlocutionary Act

A perlocutionary act is the act performed *by* issuing an utterance. For example, by arguing (illocutionary) one may convince (perlocutionary); by warning, one may alarm; by promising, one may please; by apologising, one may placate. The illocutionary acts of arguing, warning,

promising and apologising stand in contrast to the perlocutionary acts of convincing, alarming, pleasing and placating, in that the former are conventional acts with conventional consequences, and the latter are not conventional, nor are the consequences conventional. To be convinced, alarmed, pleased or placated, is to be *really* affected in some way. The consequences of a perlocutionary act are always *real* consequences, and such effects are always producible by non-verbal means.³⁸ Illocutionary acts may result in perlocutionary outcomes, but this is not necessary. Thus, in arguing I may be trying to convince someone, and if this eventuates, it could be called the perlocutionary outcome. In warning someone I may have in mind the perlocutionary *object* of alerting him, but I may, for some reason or another, not achieve this object: instead, the perlocutionary *sequel* of surprising him may eventuate. Alternatively, in performing the illocutionary act of promising, for example, there may be neither a perlocutionary object in mind, nor does any perlocutionary sequel necessarily come about. Perlocutionary effects, then, are real effects which may or may not be sequels of illocutionary acts. In the case of perlocutionary sequels which follow illocutionary acts (e.g., my hearer being pleased when I bequeath my fortune to him) the perlocutionary sequel is to be distinguished from the conventional illocutionary "sequel", i.e., his being pleased is to be distinguished from his being my heir. In the case of perlocutionary acts which are not sequels to illocutionary acts, there is no conventional effect to be accounted for, but only the "real" perlocutionary outcome.

Perlocutionary acts may *always* be performed by non-locutionary means; illocutionary acts may *sometimes* be performed by non-locutionary means, but when they are so performed, the means employed are conventional means. Illocutionary acts are *always* amenable to an explicit form (such as "In saying 'I x' I was thereby x-ing", or saying "I x..." and thereby x-ing); perlocutionary acts *never* have an explicit form such that the utterance of it is the performance of the act.

"Families" of Speech Acts

Austin distinguishes five general classes of speech act (i.e., five "families"³⁹ of illocutionary acts.

Verdictives "are typified by the giving of a verdict...by a jury, arbitrator, or umpire"⁴⁰ and include such acts as acquitting, convicting, grading, assessing, estimating, measuring, describing and diagnosing.⁴¹

Exercitives "are the exercising of powers, rights or influence" such as appointing, voting, ordering, warning, advising.⁴²

Commissives "are typified by promising or otherwise undertaking"⁴³ and have the effect of committing the utterer to do something. These include guaranteeing, opposing, contemplating, swearing, favouring, and agreeing.⁴⁴

Behabitives "have to do with social behaviour"⁴⁵ such as apologising, condoling, cursing and challenging.

Expositives "make plain how our utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation" and include such acts as conceding, re-

plying, arguing, postulating, and illustrating.⁴⁶

It should be stressed that Austin puts forward this classification very tentatively, and is aware of the existence of many overlapping cases and the need for stricter boundaries in each class. His division of the range of illocutionary forces into families does, however, focus attention on the various ways in which we do things with words. Austin suggests that one possible application of this device is in the field of ethics. A *complete* list of the ways in which we use the word "good" (i.e., what we *do* in using the word), with analyses of the various relationships and interconnections of these uses, would perhaps provide us a complex answer to some of our problems in ethics. The answer *will* be complex: but we should not expect it to be simple. As he says elsewhere: "It's not things, it's philosophers that are simple."⁴⁷

References

- ¹J. L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words* (London: O.U.P., 1962) p. 98.
- ²*Ibid.*
- ³If the locutionary act is that act of saying something, then a locution is the *something said*, and it seems odd to speak of an illocutionary act as the way one *uses* a locution.
- ⁴*How to do Things with Words, op. cit.*, p. 99.
- ⁵*Ibid.*
- ⁶*Ibid.*, p. 100.
- ⁷*Ibid.*
- ⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 109ff.
- ⁹*Ibid.*, p. 103.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 102.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 105.
- ¹²*Ibid.*, p. 102.
- ¹³It should be noted that "not being convinced" is just as much a real consequence of my trying to convince you as "being convinced". You may even become offended, insulted, etc.,--all of these are genuine perlocutionary consequences.
- ¹⁴*How to do Things with Words, op. cit.*, pp. 101-102.
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 102. Austin also compares the locutionary act "He said that..." to the illocutionary act "He argued that..." and the perlocutionary act "He convinced me that..."
- ¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 98.
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 92n.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹⁹Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 121ff.

²¹I use the term "super-phatic meaning" to denote that part of the meaning of an utterance which is not included in phatic (i.e., grammar and vocabulary) considerations of minimum sense and/or reference.

²²P. F. Strawson, "Intention and Convention in Speech Acts", *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. LXXIII, October, 1964, pp. 439-460.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 440.

²⁴*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

²⁵Of course, it is conceivable that some other convention, e.g., of "gronking" could be established in place of apologising, through the formula "I gronk". But the argument is that, no matter what the conventional procedure is, if there is not some pattern of regularity in invoking it and securing appropriate uptake, then there is neither a convention nor a procedure.

²⁶*How to Do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 97.

²⁹There are two senses of "refer" which need to be explicated. First, the doctor who refers his patient to a specialist is clearly doing something, and this appears to be the primary performative sense of the word. But there is also the notion of referring in issuing certain locutions. Thus, one could render "shoot her!" explicit by adding "In saying 'her' I was referring to Arabella." Thus, it seems that the act of referring which Austin says is ancillary to the rhetic act, is a good candidate for inclusion in the class of illocutionary acts.

²⁸*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 123.

³¹*Ibid.*

³²P. F. Strawson, "On Referring" in R. R. Ammerman, *Classics in Analytic Philosophy*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), pp. 315-334, *passim*.

³³*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

³⁴L. Johnathan Cohen, "Do Illocutionary Forces Exist?" *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, April, 1964, pp. 118-137.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 123 (parenthesis added).

³⁶*How to do Things with Words*, *op. cit.*, pp. 132ff.

³⁷Austin seems to have this two-fold concept of uptake in mind when he says (of the certain effect of the illocutionary act) that "the effect amounts to bringing about the understanding of the meaning and of the force of the locution". *Ibid.*, p. 116 (emphasis added).

³⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 150.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 150.

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷J. L. Austin, "Performative Utterances", *Philosophical Papers*, (London: O.U.P., 1961) p. 239.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONCEPT OF TEACHING

The Speech Act in Teaching

It may seem trivially true to say that much of teaching is a matter of "doing things with words." However, it is surprising that this important aspect of the teaching act has been largely ignored in research studies until recently, and even the most recent studies,¹ whilst concentrating on *verbal* teaching behaviour, have not delved very deeply into the concept of what it is *to do things* (i.e., teach) *with words*.

Austin's work, as analysed in the earlier chapters of this thesis, presents valuable insights into this concept. In particular, it helps focus attention on the *minutiae* of verbal teaching behaviour. These minutiae--henceforth referred to as *pedagogical encounters*--are the simplest possible units of didactic discourse.² The typical encounter would be the situation in which a teacher, *as a teacher*, says something to a pupil.

It should be stressed that the concept of teaching is an extremely complex one, and that the following analysis is a simple account of the simplest possible unit of teaching. No claims are made in this analysis beyond the simple concept of what it is to say something, as a teacher, to a pupil, and in or by saying that something, *to teach or attempt to teach* the pupil. It is not suggested that all teaching is verbal, nor that it is all reducible to verbal behaviour, but this study is purposely restricted to considerations of only the verbal

aspects of teaching behaviour.

The most important aspects of Austin's work, derived from the analysis in the previous four chapters, are as follows:

(i) The concept of 'doing things with words.' That teaching is an act, or a series of acts, is hardly to be denied. That it is an act which produces results in the pupil--whether the result be the intended one or not--is also obvious. But that these acts, both of trying and achieving, are often done with words, has seldom been acknowledged.

(ii) The act of teaching is essentially a matter of trying to achieve some change in the pupil (e.g., learning, or some form of changed disposition), and the teacher's verbal act is essentially an illocutionary act performed with a perlocutionary object in mind. It seems that, in teaching situations, there is a constant attempt to secure a perlocutionary outcome in the pupil by means of various illocutionary acts. Perhaps a study of the relationship between teaching and learning is essentially a study of the perlocutionary outcomes associated with various illocutionary acts.

(iii) The notion of convention in regard to illocutionary acts gives added insight into the functioning of these utterances in the teaching situation. Every illocutionary act performed by the teacher is associated with his invocation of a complex set of conventions governing the issuing of such utterances in such situations. In addition, it seems, these conventions so invoked can be made more explicit by the teacher, i.e., he can, by using an explicit performative formula, make it clear how his utterance is to be taken by the pupil.

(iv) The notion of uptake on the part of the pupil gives insight into one significant way in which the teacher's utterance may or may not "get across" to the pupil. Thus, when a teacher invokes the conventions of performing a particular illocutionary act in a certain situation, the pupil needs to *take* the teacher's utterance *as* that particular illocutionary act. In order to do this, the pupil must be familiar with the particular conventions so invoked, and, in his consideration of the situation, must be prepared to accept that the invocation of those conventions is appropriate for the performance of the particular illocutionary act by the teacher. This is the notion of pupil uptake, and in cases where an utterance is not happily "uptaken" infelicities must be expected.

(v) The notion of infelicities provides a dimension of analysis whereby the sorts of things that can go wrong in the performance of an illocutionary act may be analysed and classified.

(vi) Finally, the phatic act and the act of referring may be abstracted from the total speech situation. Such abstraction is expedient because it allows for the conceptualisation of infelicities at either of these levels. Although it has been argued (in Chapter V) that the act of referring is essentially bound up with the illocutionary act, a distinction can be made between pupil *intake* of the teacher's act of referring, and pupil *uptake* of the illocutionary act. The former may be said to affect the *precision* of the utterance, and the latter, the *explicitness*.

The Pedagogical Encounter

It is proposed, in this chapter, to elucidate the concept of a pedagogical encounter by diagrammatic means, using some of the more helpful aspects of Austin's work. It should be stressed at this stage that the diagrams employed are heuristic in so far as they highlight areas which are in need of further empirical and/or conceptual investigation. It is not claimed that the diagrams have an abundance of *explanatory* power, because they often seem to pose more problems than they answer. They *do* represent tentative descriptive conceptualisations of the pedagogical encounter, and they *do* focus attention on areas which *could* become satisfactorily explanatory, pending further inquiry.

It is important to bear in mind in the following analysis that the pedagogical encounter is situation-bound. Of primary interest is the notion of someone *teaching* someone else, and whether or not the hearer of the utterance takes what he hears as an act of teaching will depend on the situation. Thus, if a student, during a coffee-break, says to a group of professors "Australian politics has moved to the right in recent years", he will not usually be regarded as having *taught* his professors something, but only as having told them. But if that same student, while engaged in teaching a grade 10 Social Studies class, says the same thing, he is usually thought of as having taught it, and not as having merely told it to his students. The situation, the relationship between the parties involved, the intentions of the speaker, and the uptake of the hearer, all affect the nature of the utterance greatly, especially in relation to what act is performed in the issuing of the utterance. Naturally, much of

what transpires in pedagogical encounters may be regarded simply as matters of telling, warning, advising, etc., but the peculiar relation which holds between the parties involved gives all of these acts a certain flavour--characterised by the fact that in classroom situations all of the acts are taken as acts of teaching, whilst outside of such a situation, very few such acts would be regarded as teaching.

Gilbert Ryle's *The Concept of Mind*, in abolishing the 'myth' of 'the ghost in the machine', placed an emphasis on behavioural terms in attempting to deal with the words we use to talk about 'mental' states and processes. Of particular importance in this present context are Ryle's notions of 'episodes' and 'dispositions'. He regards *knowing* as a disposition, and saying something one knows as an episode. In connection with the problem of other minds--the problem, that is, of how we know something about another person's state of mind--Ryle says that episodes are 'inference tickets' for making assertions about other people's dispositions. Thus 'John Doe is speaking French' is an inference ticket for concluding that 'John Doe *knows* French.'³ Adapting this idea to the teaching situation, it seems reasonable to assume that a teacher's assessment of pupil dispositions (e.g., how much Johnny knows, or whether Johnny knows that London is the capital of England) is based on his perception of sundry items of Johnny's behaviour. Thus, if Johnny is to be said to have a certain disposition (e.g., that he knows that London is the capital of England), the evidence which supports this assertion is Johnny's giving episodic instance of such disposition (e.g., by answering the question 'What is the capital of England?'). Such episodic instances act as inference

tickets for assertions to be made about corresponding dispositions. Thus, the initiation of a pedagogical encounter arises from a set of circumstances, the simplest being an instance of a pupil episode (Pe_1) which may or may not be indicative of a pupil disposition (Pd_1). The teacher either perceives such an episode, or assumes that the child is prone to such episodes (see Figure 2), and uses this as an inference ticket to conclude that the child has a corresponding disposition. This conclusion leads the teacher to a decision to do something about the disposition, i.e., to reinforce it, or to alter it by inducing another disposition (Pd_2). For example, Pe_1 may be Johnny's failure to answer the question "What is the capital of England?" or Billy's derisive laughter at another pupil's wrong answer, or Susan's query about the function of an adverb in a sentence. From these various pupil episodes the teacher may infer that Johnny does not know that London is the capital of England, or that Billy is prone to a lack of consideration for the feelings of others, or that Susan does not realise that adverbs may modify adjectives as well as verbs. Once he comes to such a conclusion the teacher may decide to produce a change in these various pupil dispositions, and this results in his intention to *inform* Johnny that London is the capital of England, or to *warn* Billy that he will lose many friends if he continues to belittle them, or to *show* Susan how adverbs can modify adjectives. How he intends to do these things--*inform*, *warn*, *show*-- is with words, and his doing these things with words is *teaching*.

Infelicities may occur at any of the levels indicated in Figure 2.

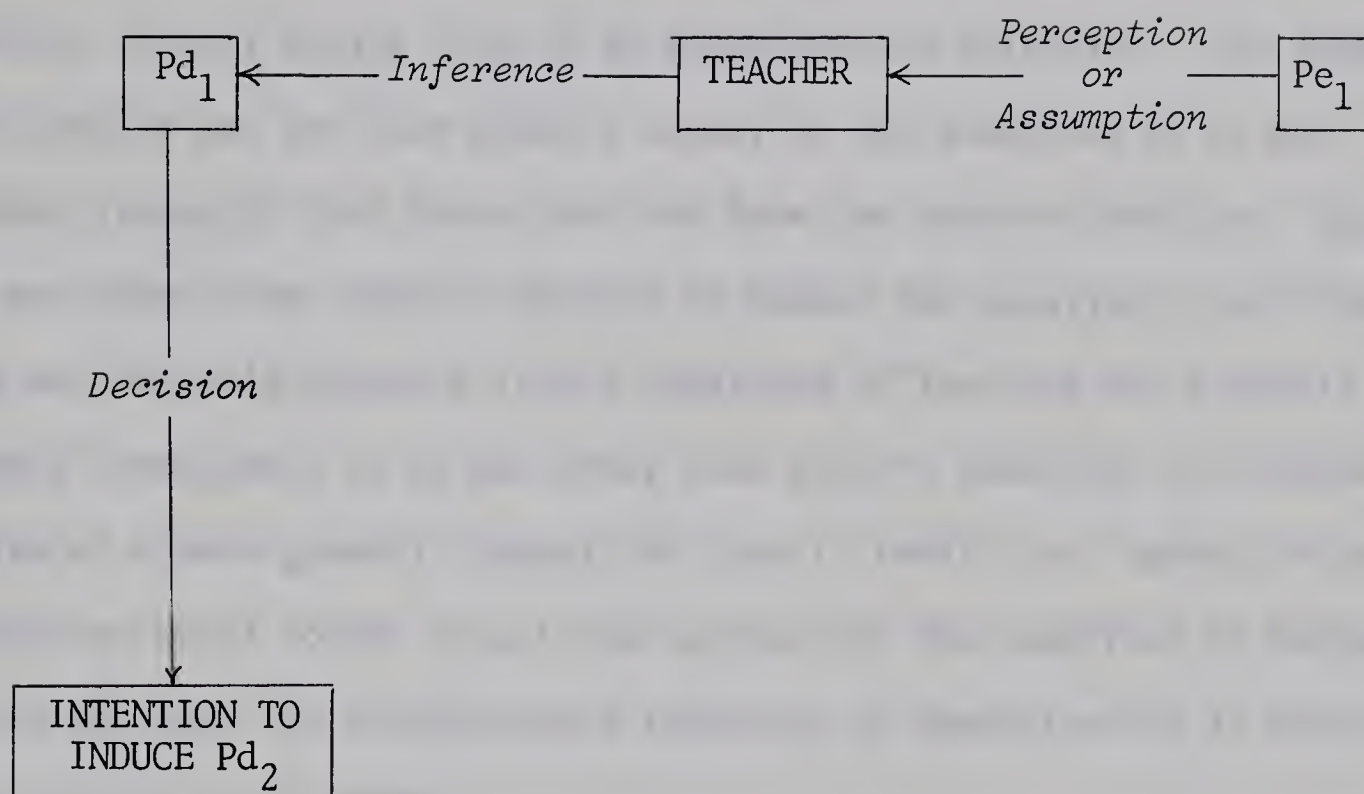


Figure 2. Initiation of the Pedagogical Encounter.

For example, the teacher's perception of Pe_1 , or his assumption that Pe_1 is likely to occur, given certain conditions, etc., may be erroneous. Likewise, his inference may be faulty in that Pe_1 is not (perhaps) indicative of the disposition d_1 , or his decision may be faulty, thereby giving rise to an inappropriate intention. For example, the teacher may not hear Johnny's answer to the question, or he may assume (wrongly) that Susan does not know how adverbs function. Again, he may infer from Johnny's failure to answer the question, that Johnny has not done his homework (which consisted of learning the capitals of twenty countries); or he may infer that Billy's behaviour is indicative of a more general disposition than it really is. Again, he may decide to drill Johnny on all the capitals of the countries of Europe; or he may have the inappropriate intention of demonstrating to Susan how adverbs modify verbs.

Figure 2, then, attempts to highlight the processes whereby a pedagogical encounter is initiated. Although much has been borrowed from Ryle's work in this figure, it does seem to fit well into the basically Austinian approach that is to be taken from here on. Since Austin emphasises the notion of "doing things with words", and since the concept of teaching accommodates a certain purposiveness behind teaching acts, the teacher's intentions, and how he formulates them, seem to be quite important in the initial stages. Indeed, it seems reasonable that pupils will be better equipped to react in appropriate ways if they have some insight into the teacher's intentions. How they gain this insight is dealt with next.

The teacher's intentions to induce Pd_2 --i.e., to help Johnny come to know that London is the capital of England, to convince Billy that he should not laugh at the efforts of others, or to make Susan aware that adverbs modify adjectives as well as verbs--leads to the invocation of a complex set of conventions which govern his attempts to do these things with words (Figure 3). These conventions govern, in particular, the teacher's illocutionary acts of stating, warning, describing, etc., his acts of referring in words to various objects, ideas, etc., and his phatic act of constructing a pheme which meets the requirements of grammar and vocabulary.⁴ Thus, the conventions which govern trying to bring Johnny to know that London is the capital of England are (a) those which govern the phatic act of constructing and uttering the pheme "London is the capital of England," which includes considerations of grammar and vocabulary, as well as, perhaps, predication; (b) those which govern the act of referring by "London" to London, by "England" to England, etc., and (c) those which govern the force of telling, as distinct from asking, warning, postulating, etc. Similarly, conventions appropriate to the pheme, reference and force of warning Billy that he should not laugh at his friends' efforts, are also invoked by the teacher. Any of these invocations is liable to the infelicity of misinvocation: in order to fulfil his intention of inducing Pd_2 , the teacher may (perhaps unwittingly) invoke the conventions of trying to induce Pd_3 (e.g., he may rebuke the child, or postulate something, instead of informing or warning, and the resulting disposition (d_3) may be confusion, or belief instead of

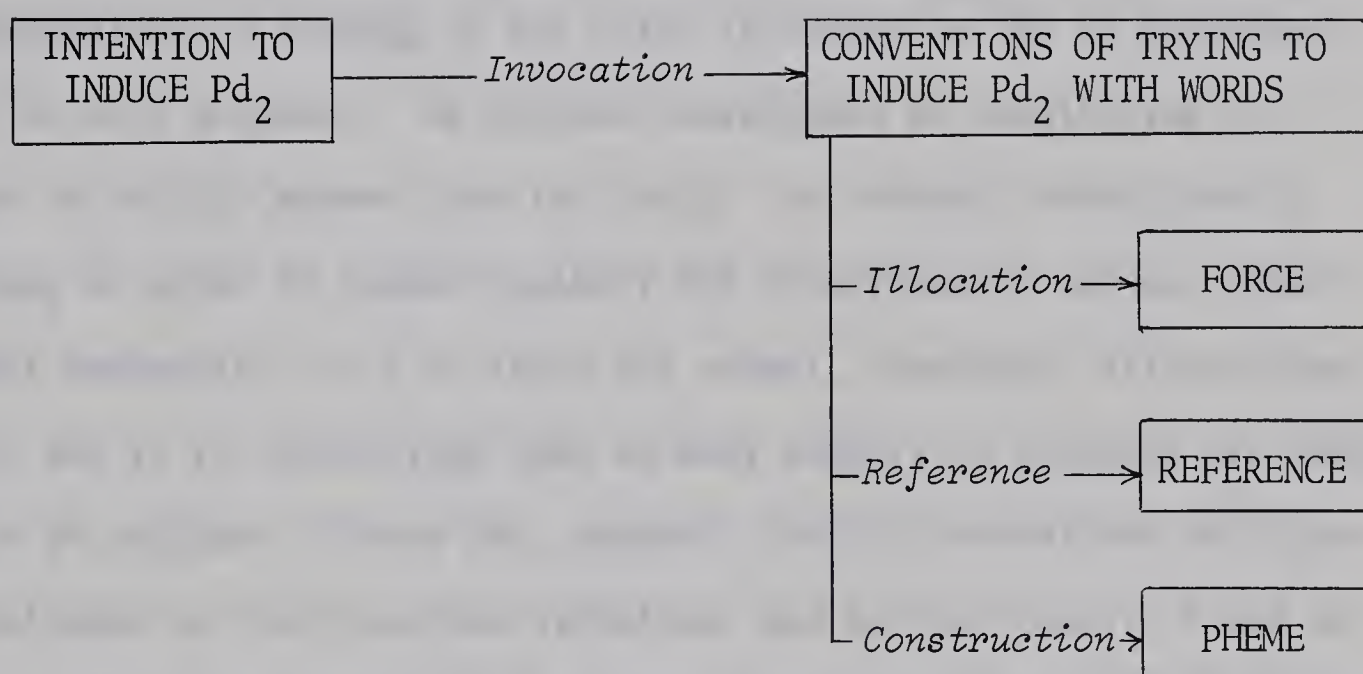


Figure 3. Invocation of the conventions of performing the verbal act of teaching.

knowing. Further, there may be more particular infelicities in either the acts of referring or constructing, e.g., if he says "London is the capital of the British Isles" or "England is the capital of London."

Figure 3, then, focuses attention on the invocation of conventions by the teacher. He invokes conventions of stating in order to induce a disposition of knowing in the child (although he has no guarantee that he will succeed). He invokes conventions of questioning in order to solicit answer from the child. He invokes conventions of warning in order to render unlikely the recurrence of certain behavioural tendencies. All of these are normal, "everyday" illocutionary acts, and it is interesting that so many aspects of teaching are really quite so ordinary. There are, however, certain conventions which are established in the classroom situation, and are not usually found in normal everyday situations. An obvious example of this is the "hands up" convention associated with the way in which pupils volunteer to participate in a lesson. The use of the rhetorical question in teaching is another instance of a convention being invoked in such a way that, unlike other questions, no response is invited. Less obvious, but perhaps more interesting, are those conventions which a *particular* teacher establishes with a particular class. These might be referred to as matters of "style" in teaching. For example, certain teachers invoke particular conventions of commending, threatening or encouraging--conventions, that is, which are *only* invoked by that teacher in that situation, and are thus almost a kind of secret language.

A mere raising of the eyebrows may have the illocutionary force of inviting a response from the class; or, if a teacher says something like "I'm terribly worried about the weather," it may have the illocutionary force of warning the class that the games lesson scheduled for that afternoon may be cancelled if better efforts are not forthcoming in spelling; or, placing a bambi stamp in a child's workbook may have the illocutionary force of assigning a certain evaluation to the work in the book. To an outsider, some of these "ritual" acts may seem incomprehensible. But if they have been established as conventions in the teaching situation, then they are regularly taken by the children in the way in which they are intended by the teacher. This notion of convention--whether it refers to everyday conventions, or to the latter "semi-secret" types-- focuses attention on the importance of pupil uptake. That is, the utterance (or ritual act) will not be taken in the way it is intended unless the convention invoked is one with which the pupils are familiar.

Thus, for the utterance to have a chance of being successful in the achievement of the teacher's intentions, certain things have to be in order from the pupil's point of view (see Figure 4). Perhaps the most obvious of these is that the pupil needs to recognise the pheme, especially in terms of the vocabulary and grammar used. Thus, he must realise that both the form of the utterance and the vocables in it are parts of a language he knows, and he must know these particular parts. In addition, he must understand (*intake*) the reference made by the teacher, e.g., that by "London" the teacher refers to a city in England, not Ontario. Perhaps not quite so obvious, but possibly even more

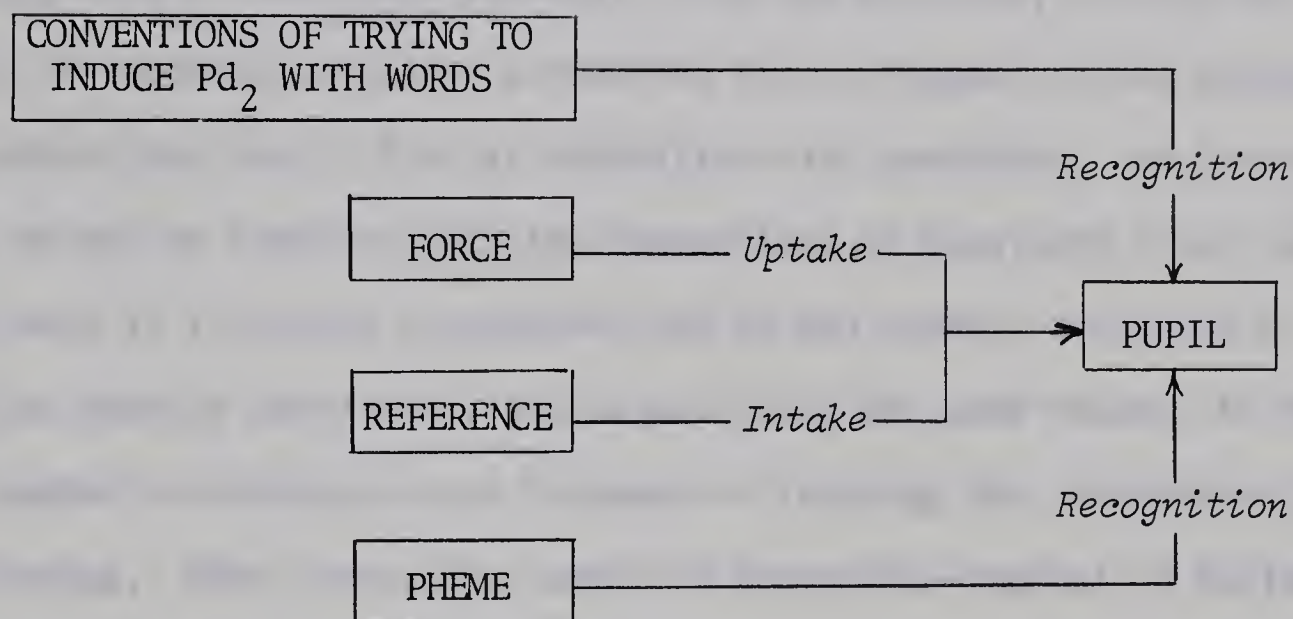


Figure 4. Pupil apprehension of teacher intentions.

important, is the fact that the child must recognise the conventions invoked by the teacher--he must know that there is such a conventional procedure as asking a question, giving a warning, or making a statement. Further, he must take the teacher's utterance *as an instance* of invoking such a convention (*uptake*). On the one hand, a child can hardly be expected to answer a question (i.e., respond in the appropriate conventional way) if he is unfamiliar with questions; on the other hand, he may be familiar with the conventions of questions (i.e., he knows what it is to ask a question, and he can usually recognise a question when he hears one), but he may fail, for some reason, to take the teacher's utterance *as an instance* of invoking the conventions of questioning. When the teacher says "Is London the capital of England?" the child may take him to be *stating* and not *asking*. Alternatively, if the teacher says to Billy "Laugh again, and I'll give you what-for" Billy may take this as a joke, whereas the teacher intended it as a warning.

Infelicities in this aspect of the pedagogical encounter may take several forms. Perhaps a working definition of "rote" learning may be obtained from the idea of there being an infelicity in the child's intake of the teacher's act of reference. Thus, he correctly takes the utterance "London is the capital of England" as an instance of invoking the conventions of stating or informing, and his uptake of the force is an appropriate uptake of the force of stating or informing, and his recognition of the pheme is satisfactory in that he knows that "London" refers to a city, "England" to a country, and "capital" to a seat of government, but he does not understand that the *teacher* is

referring by "London" to *the London in England*. Thus, the disposition resulting in the child may well be that he *knows* that London is the capital of England, this being given episodic instance in his saying that London is the capital of England, or answering the question "What is the capital of England?", but he may not be able to say just what the referent of "London" is, or he may not be able to indicate (e.g., on a map) what the teacher was referring to by "London".

Felicitous uptake of illocutionary force ensures that the *explicitness* of the utterance is caught by the pupil, and felicitous intake of the reference ensures that the *precision* of the utterance is caught.

Perhaps an infelicity at the level of the child's knowledge of conventions could throw light on the concept of 'mental set.' Through his knowledge of the conventions of questioning or stating, the child has certain *expectations* about the teacher's likely action in a given encounter. Perhaps 'mental set' could be regarded as the child's expectations in regard to the conventions appropriately invocable in a given encounter, and his anticipation of the particular invocation of a particular convention that his teacher is likely to employ.

Through a satisfactory perception of the utterance on all four counts in Figure 4, the pupil may be said to apprehend at least something of the teacher's intentions. That is, he becomes aware of something like this: "The teacher is *telling* me (and I know what *telling* is) that London (he means the city in England) is the capital (he means the city where the parliament meets) of England (the country just across the channel from France) *and* he expects me to learn this and remember it." This, too, may be related to the concept of mental

set in that the fulfilment of the child's expectations renders his apprehension of the teacher's intentions happy, whereas, if the conventions invoked by the teacher are markedly different from the child's expectations (e.g., if the teacher *warned* him when he expected to be *informed*), the reaction may be a confused one.

The pupil's reaction leads to an outcome which may or may not be Pd_2 (see Figure 5). (And, as Ryle points out, dispositions may not last for long, i.e., Johnny may now know that London is the capital of England, but whether he still knows this tomorrow will depend on the eventuation of Pe_2 .) The outcome is dispositional and may be exhibited by a response in the form of another Pe , which, again, acts as an inference ticket for the teacher to evaluate the success or otherwise of his speech-act, and to plan further strategy.

Infelicities in this area can occur at the level of pupil reaction, and these may be related to infelicities of mental set or rote learning discussed earlier. It should also be emphasised that Pe_2 is essentially a conventional matter in so far as it is often an illocutionary act on the part of the pupil; hence more infelicities of the types discussed earlier are to be expected in the response. Indeed, it seems very likely that more infelicities are to be expected in this area, because children tend to be less familiar with ways of invoking conventions. Consequently, invoking the conventions of trying to let the teacher know whether any dispositional changes have taken place may be a job which many children do badly; similarly, seeing which conventions the child should have invoked may be a job which many teachers do badly.

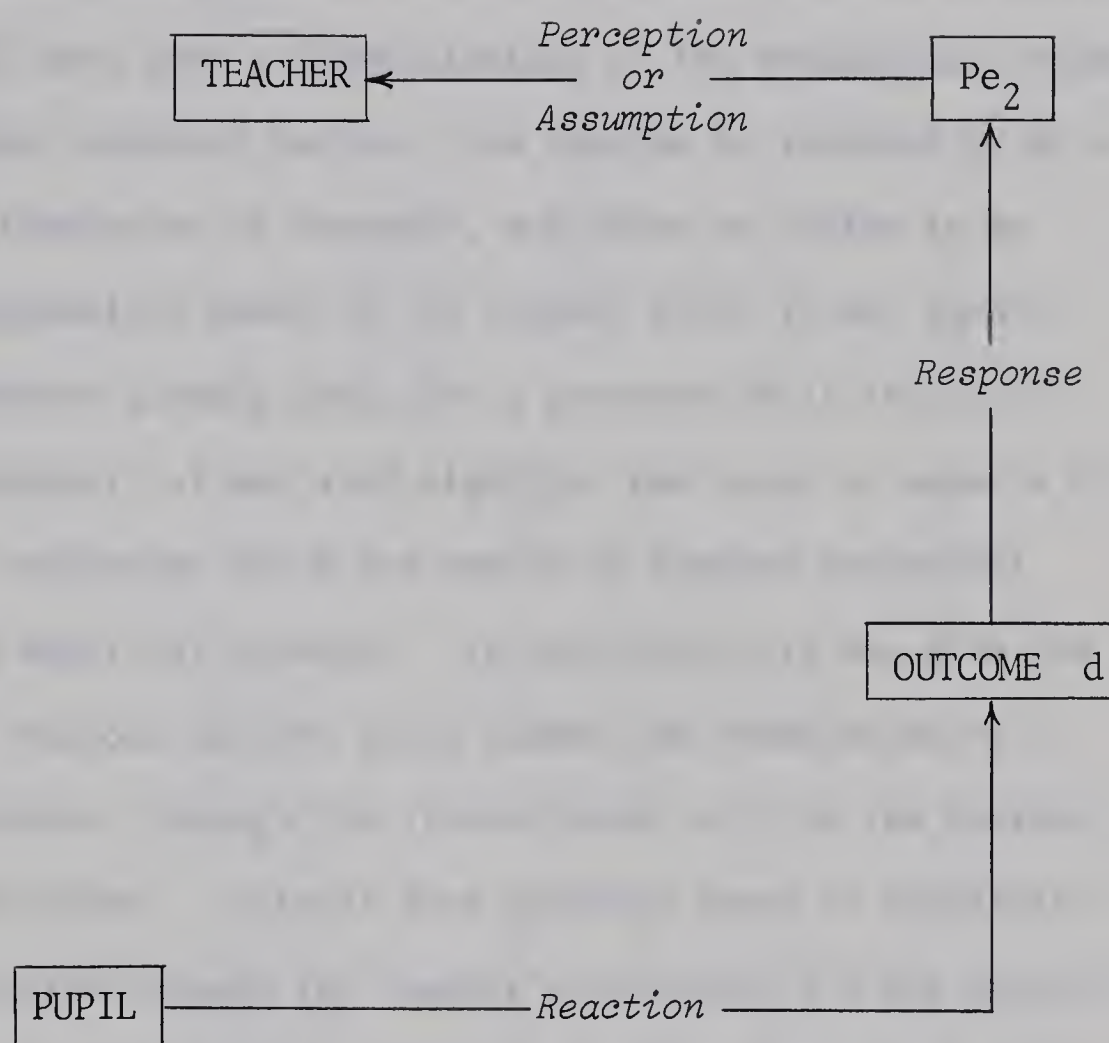


Figure 5. Pupil reaction and response in the pedagogical encounter. (N.B.: Pupil invocation of the conventions of responding not included.)

Suggestions for Further Inquiry

Figure 6 (which is an amalgamation of Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5) is an attempt to incorporate some of the more relevant aspects of Austin's theory of speech acts into a schematisation of the pedagogical encounter. As has been indicated earlier, the diagram is intended to be a model for the stimulation of research, and makes no claims to an abundance of explanatory power in its present form: it may locate some of the research already done into a perspective of the total pedagogical encounter; it may also highlight new areas or aspects of the pedagogical encounter which are worthy of further conceptual analysis and/or empirical research. In particular, it may give due emphasis to the various factors which impede the translation of a teacher's intentions, through his illocutionary act, to the desired perlocutionary outcome. At least four possible areas of infelicity have been identified between the teacher's utterance and the pupil's response. These are the pupil's knowledge of the conventions, his uptake of the illocutionary force, his intake of the teacher's act of reference, and his recognition of the pheme. The pupil apprehends the teacher's intentions through these. Infelicities here may not necessarily result in the non-eventuation of the desired outcome, but they would at least *impede* such outcome, in as much as the pupil, being unaware of the teacher's intentions (and thus unable to know how he is expected to respond), is liable to misconstrue the teacher's efforts. It seems worthwhile to pursue the implications of infelicities in this area, and it remains to be suggested the ways in which

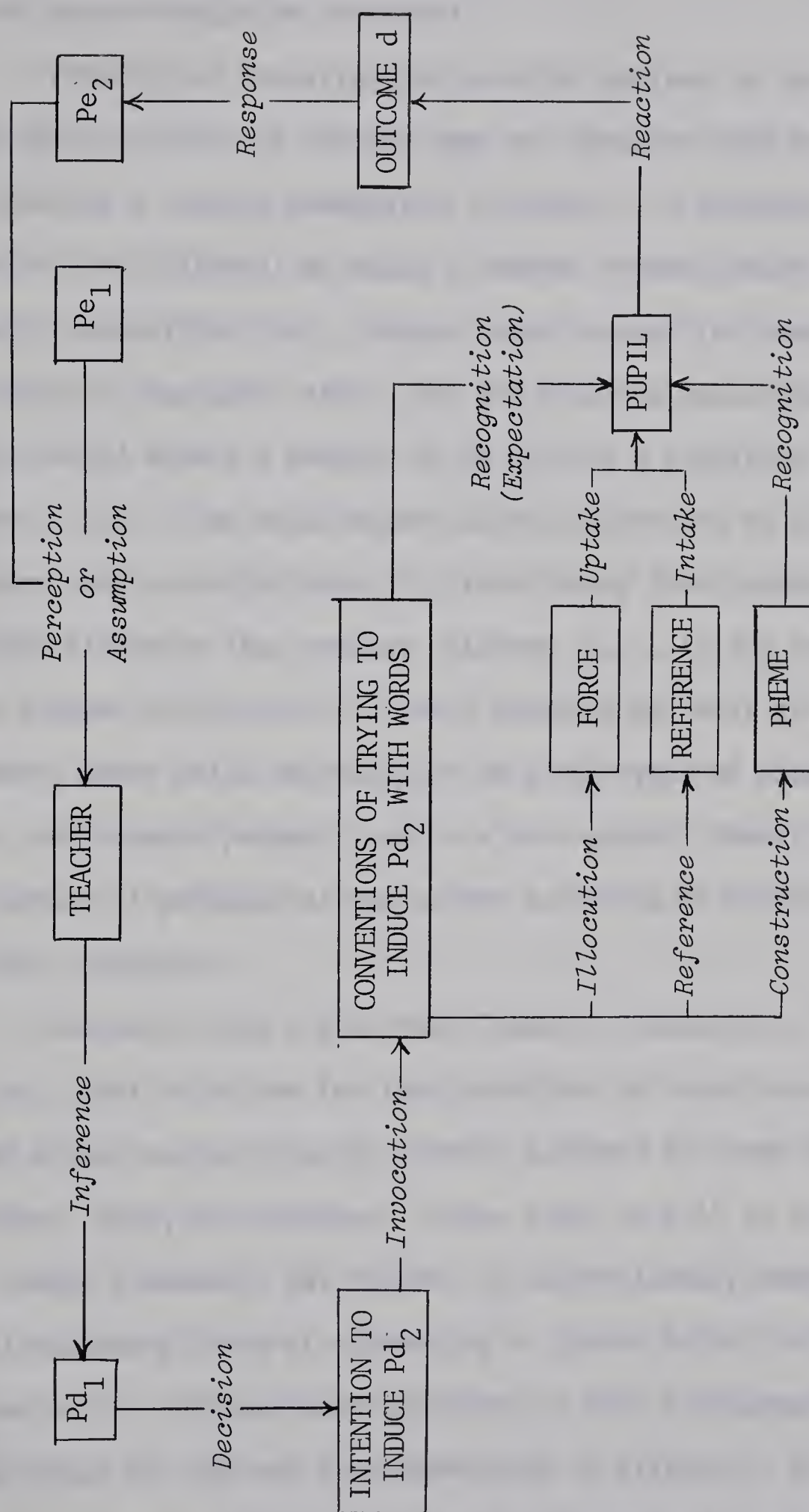


Figure 6. Heuristic Model of the pedagogical encounter.

such pursuit might be initiated.

Firstly, an investigation could be devised to test the extent to which children of various ages are familiar with the conventions governing a typical pedagogical encounter. A situation could be described (to children) in which a teacher becomes aware of a particular pupil disposition (e.g., Johnny cannot answer the question "What is the capital of England?" etc.), and the children could then be asked what they would expect a teacher to do in such a situation (advise, tell, warn, etc.). One would expect older children to be able to detect more subtle distinctions of illocutionary force appropriate to a given situation than younger children (e.g., is the teacher expected to *expound* or *describe*?). Such research may well give rise to a theory about child expectations in given types of pedagogical encounter, which would perhaps lead to a more general theory about the classification of pedagogical encounters according to conventions appropriately invocable.

Secondly, Ryle's idea that didactic discourse is "progressive" (i.e., that it allows for the production of results not contained in the actual content) may be further analysed in terms of illocutionary force. Thus, the statement "Jesus loves us all" is rarely *taken as* a simple statement, but rather, is conventionally endowed with the illocutionary force of attempting to induce belief or commitment of some sort. Perlocutionary outcomes in such a pedagogical encounter may range all the way from conversion to distaste. Further conceptual analysis may well reveal--in this and comparable pedagogical encount-

ers--the relation between the four possible areas of infelicity discussed earlier, and the pupil's apprehension of the teacher's intentions. What is the difference between convincing a pupil that Jesus loves him, and convincing him that the earth is spherical? Since the former is usually regarded as a case of the child coming to *believe*, and the latter as a case of the child coming to *know*, it might well be asked whether the conventions of attempting to induce belief are the same as the conventions of attempting to induce knowledge. It might also be asked whether the nature of the illocutionary force and its uptake is affected by the act of reference in such utterances.

The question of analysing the concept of teaching, as Smith has done, into a number of specifiable episode-types, raises the question of a pedagogical residue. Thus, if all the synonyms for "teach" were collected, would there be any aspect of "teaching" left unaccounted for? In other words, is there an exhaustive list of illocutionary forces and perlocutionary outcomes in teaching? Such a question may have great significance for the organisation of research into teaching, particularly if it allowed for subdivision of the concept of teaching into more minute aspects.

In terms of Austin's classification of varieties of illocutionary force into behabitives, exercitives, expositives, commissives, and verdictives, interaction analysis of verbal teaching acts could be conducted, provided account was taken in such research of the various requirements of felicity and pupil apprehension of teacher intentions.

These aspects are neglected in the studies by Flanders⁵ and Smith.⁶ However, it seems that the basic techniques of the Flanders study might be adapted to this new inquiry, and the classification system of the Smith study could be refined in Austinian terms. Such a study would throw light on the use made by teachers of behabitives, expositives, etc., and on the extent to which pupils are familiar with such devices, and the kinds of situation in which they expect their invocation by the teacher. It could also lead to investigations of the relation between teacher intentions and types of invocation arising out of such intentions.

It should be pointed out that the pupil response (Figure 5) is also essentially a matter of verbal convention. An interesting study would be to analyse and test the relationship between (a) teacher intention and invocation of a convention, and (b) pupil disposition and invocation of a response-convention. This could be developed into a more general study of the apprehension of teacher intentions by pupils, and the apprehension of pupil dispositions by teachers. Presumably, there would be parallels of certain kinds between the two processes of apprehension.

Finally, it is claimed that the heuristic model (Figure 6) is valuable primarily because it allows for the grounding of several important concepts in behaviour--a feature which opens several doors to empirical research. If philosophical analysis in education does no more than this, it is worthy of its place in the foundations of education.

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¹See B. O. Smith, *et al.*, *A Study of the Logic of Teaching* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1963). Mimeographed.

²The term "didactic discourse" is borrowed from Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963), pp. 264-300.

³Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-147.

⁴Other aspects of Austin's work, e.g., the phonetic act, *could* be incorporated into the model, but at this stage, parsimony rules that some form of Occam's razor be allowed to operate. It is not suggested that these considerations are unimportant: they would, however, introduce complications which would hinder the development of the model. Thus, in the interests of simplicity and clarity, they have been omitted.

⁵Ned A. Flanders, *Teacher Influence, Pupil Attitudes, and Achievement* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1960). Mimeographed.

⁶B. O. Smith, *A Study of the Logic of Teaching*, *op. cit.*

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